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# SCHILLER;

DRAMATIST, HISTORIAN, AND POET.

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A CENTENARY LECTURE.

*Schiller; dramatist, historian, and poet, a centenary lecture*

Alfred Newsom Niblett



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**SCHILLER;**

DRAMATIST, HISTORIAN, AND POET.

---

A CENTENARY LECTURE.

Was der Gott mich gelehrt, was mir durchs Leben geholfen,  
Häng' ich, dankbar und fromm, hier in dem Heilighum auf.

Schiller.

# SCHILLER;

## DRAMATIST, HISTORIAN, AND POET.

A Centenary Lecture

upon the Life and Genius of Friedrich Von Schiller.

BY

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LONDON AND EDINBURGH:  
WILLIAMS & NORGATE.  
SHEFFIELD: PAWSON & BRAILSFORD

MDCCCLX.

210. C. 244.



*Inscribed,*

WITH MUCH RESPECT,

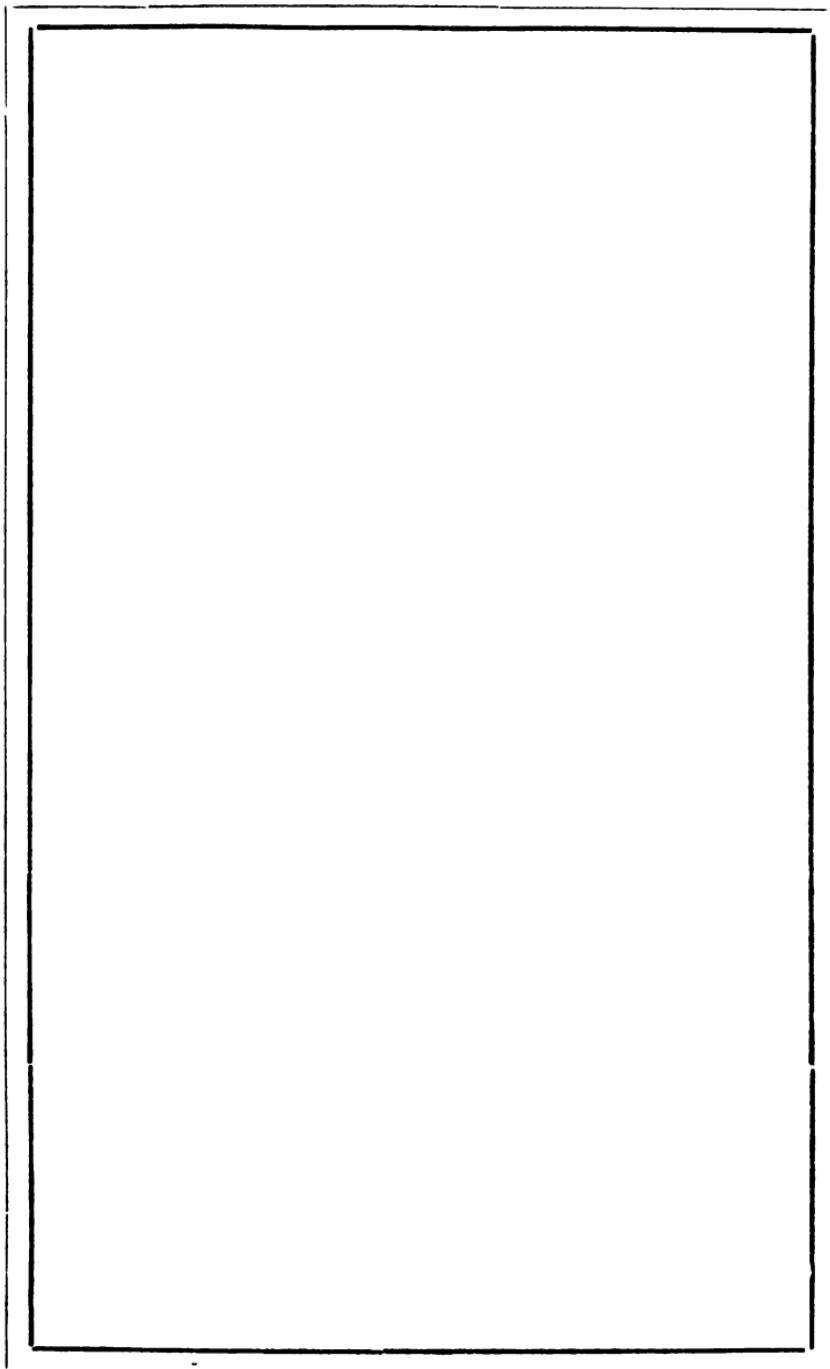
TO

THE REV. THOMAS SALE, D.D.,

HONORARY CANON OF YORK, AND RURAL DEAN,

VICAR OF SHEFFIELD,

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SHEFFIELD COLLEGIATE SCHOOL



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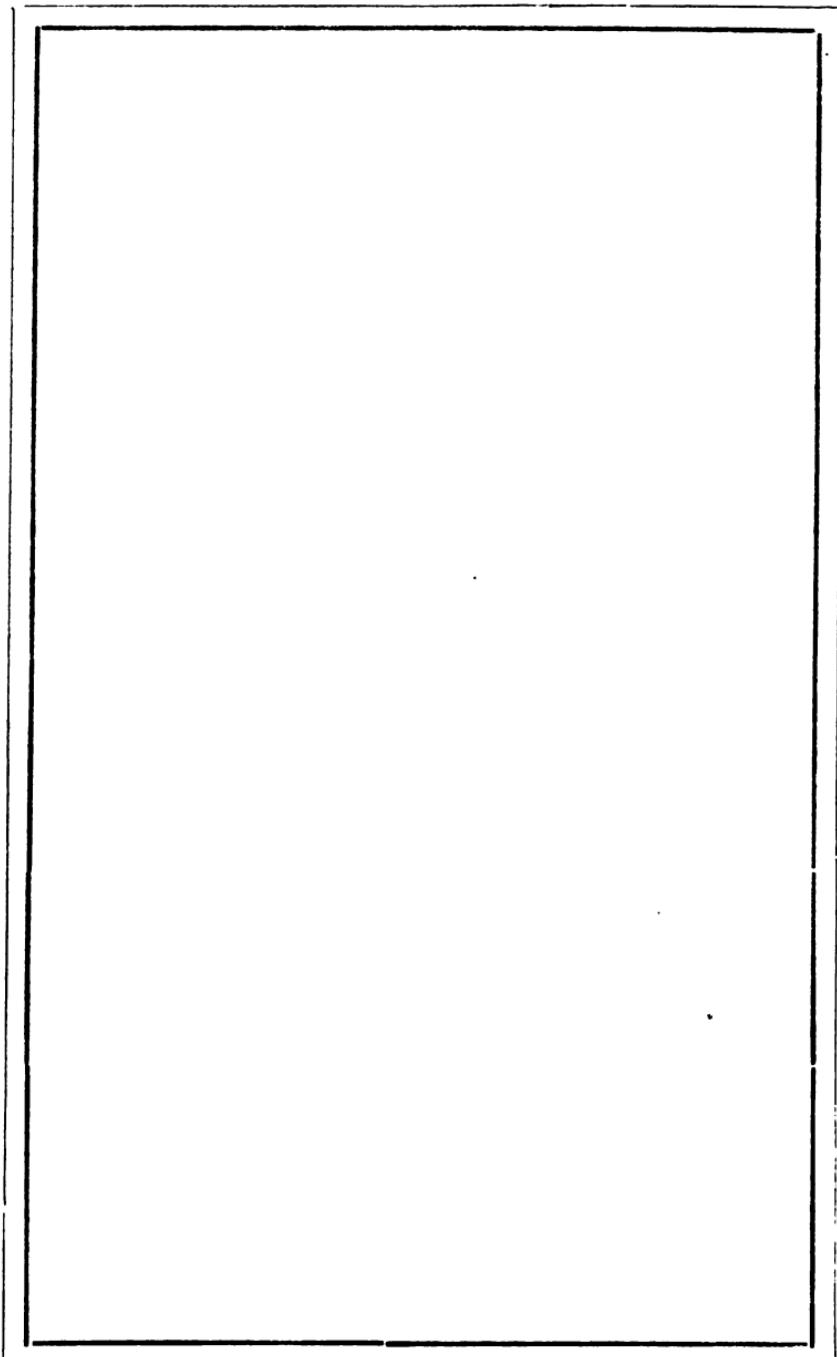
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## FIRST PERIOD.

(1759-1783.)

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### INTRODUCTION.

#### EARLY LIFE.

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ON the tenth of November, *one hundred years ago* (1759), there was born in the town of Marbach, on the banks of the Neckar,

**J. C. Friedrich Schiller,**

the greatest dramatist, and one of the most powerful historians and noblest poets which the last century has produced — the idol of his nation.

The life of this illustrious man, "the type of modern thought," cannot fail to be interesting and profitable to the student, for in it we can gather many noble and serviceable lessons. We can learn that perseverance is the safe road to success; that genius matures only by long continued self-culture; and that the end and aim of

intellect should be to appeal to, strengthen, and foster the best feelings of our nature. It is a pleasing task to follow the stream of a life so troubled, yet sparkling at its outset ; so placid, clear, and brilliant in its after current.

Schiller was the son of a retired captain in the army, and received the elements of a classical education under the tutorship of the celebrated Jahn. But the instruction by which he most profited was that of his parents, who were both actuated by the purest principles of piety. From his mother he likewise inherited a poetic temperament, which she took every pains to foster. After several changes of residence and schools, he was entered,—against his own will, which inclined him to the church,—as a law student, at a new college founded by the Duke of Würtemberg. He soon turned his attention to the less tedious study of medicine, and it was doubtless owing to his unsettled early life ‘that his progress, though respectable, or more, was so little commensurate with what he afterwards became.’ His poetical genius, doubtless, had a like influence ; for, even while quite a child, he was found, during a thunderstorm, “perched on the branch of a tree, gazing at the tempestuous face of the sky, and watching the flashes, as in succession they spread their lurid gleam over it ; and, when reprimanded by his parent, he replied that the lightning was so very beautiful, he wished to see where it was coming from.’ At twelve years of age, while preparing for confirmation, he wrote a hymn ; and two years afterwards he had finished the plan of his dissertation on the *Legation of Moses*. We likewise find him pouring forth a poetic

malediction on a town in which he had been unable to invest his kreutzers in curds and cream, and solemnly bestowing his blessing on another, which had furnished him with the coveted delicacy. During this period Schiller applied himself but little to routine study ; he often feigned sickness, in order to write poetry, or peruse favourite authors in his chamber — Utz, Klopstock, Lessing, Göthe, and Gerstenberg were the constant friends of his youth. After six years of harassing drudgery, he graduated, and became an army physician, and, having penned a mass of minor productions of little value, he published “ *The Robbers*.”

This melodrama was first acted at Mannheim (1782), and so great was its success all over Germany that he firmly resolved henceforth to devote his whole time and energy to literature.

Schiller’s dramas and poems are a perfect reflection of his life and heart, and in them may be traced every step of his moral training and intellectual progress. I shall, therefore, take but a very cursory glance at his other writings. In order to enable you the better to understand the state of his mind at this period, allow me at once to direct your attention to

### **The Robbers**

the most stimulant tragedy extant in German literature, and a work which is very intimately associated with his name and fame.

This drama is the result of Schiller’s profound discon-

tent at the then prevailing state of the world, and at the sad system of despotism under which he vainly sighed, whilst studying in the Karlsschule, near Stuttgart. It is therefore not to be wondered at that a mighty genius like Schiller, young in soul, rich in an exhaustless fancy, wedded to a free and active life, but nevertheless bound to a narrow sphere by the irksome fetters of subordination, and estranged from all the realities of life, without which the boldest imagination and the most sublime thoughts are but as the golden food which King Midas so little profited by, — I say it is not to be wondered at that Schiller, under these sad circumstances, should have composed, as his first drama, "The Robbers," a production which sounds as the cry of anguish of a prisoner longing for freedom, or as the torrent of an indignation of which a great soul alone is capable. It is in consequence of these peculiar ideas, so essentially opposite to the then received opinions of the world, that the drama is based upon passions so violent. To this cause, likewise, we may trace the exaggerations so constantly therein occurring, and the fact of many of the characters altogether transgressing the bounds of nature; of which we have a startling example in the hero, a youth who does not scruple even to say that 'two men like himself would destroy the whole constitution of the moral world.' You will the better understand this when I give a short outline of the plot.

Franz Moor, the hero's brother, an execrable villain, whose talents well fitted him for the execution of his

wicked purposes, compels his weak-minded old father (the Count Max) to disinherit the child in whom all his affections were centred, under the pretext that he was, by his excesses, rendered altogether an unfit object for the paternal love—a device conceived solely for the purpose of obtaining for himself the family possessions. The injured student, Karl Moor, who from his previous confidence in his doting and revered sire's undying love,—a feeling strengthened by the indulgences he so invariably experienced,—is wounded to the very quick, and, losing all sense of filial piety, he becomes imbued with a fierce hatred against the whole human race, and makes it his sole purpose himself to take the part of that neglectful Nemesis, who allowed such cruel injuries to pass unrevenged. In order to resuscitate the dormant spirit of freedom he becomes a robber chieftain, thinking to cure oppression with the sword. Soon, however,—but, alas, too late!—after a fearful apprenticeship, he finds that he is attempting the impossible task of exterminating cruelty by cruel means, and banishing injustice by the means of unjust actions, and that he has constantly shed innocent blood in the very effort to protect it. He would submit himself to the control of human law, but finds that human happiness is now with him impossible; which feeling is so pathetically expressed in the following words:—

Sei mir gegrüßt, Vaterlandserde! (Er küßt die Erde.) Vater-  
landshimmel! Vaterlandsonne! — und Fluren und Hügel und  
Ströme und Wälder! seyd alle, alle mir herzlich gegrüßt! Wie so  
köstlich wehet die Luft von meinen Heimathgebirgen! wie frömt bal-  
samische Wonne aus euch dem armen Flüchtlings entgegen!

Die goldenen Maienjahre der Knabenzeit leben wieder auf in der Seele des Glenden—da warst du so glücklich, warst so ganz, so wolkenlos heiter—und nun—da liegen die Trümmer deiner Entwürfe.\*

I cannot refrain from here inserting the striking scene where Karl, in disguise, visits his betrothed, and enters into conversation with her, as follows:—

MOOR.—Sie da, gnädiges Fräulein? und traurig? und eine Thräne auf diesem Gemälde? (Amalia giebt ihm keine Antwort.) Und wer ist der Glückliche, um den sich das Auge eines Engels versilbert? darf auch ich diesen Verherrlichen.—(Er will das Gemälde betrachten.)

AMALIA.—Nein, ja, nein!

MOOR.—(zurückfahrend.) Ha! und verdient er diese Bergötterung? verdient er?

AMALIA.—Wenn Sie ihn gekannt hätten!

MOOR.—Ich würde ihn beneidet haben.

AMALIA.—Angebetet, wollen Sie sagen. O, Sie hätten ihn so lieb gehabt—es war so viel, so viel in seinem Angesicht—in seinen Augen—im Ton seiner Stimme, das Ihnen gleich kommt—das ich so liebe. Hier, wo Sie stehen, stand er tausendmal, und neben ihm die, die neben ihm Himmel und Erde vergaß—hier durchirrte sein Aug die um ihn prangende Gegend; sie schien den großen belohnenden Blick zu empfinden und sich unter dem Wohlgefallen ihres

\* For the convenience of such of my readers as are unacquainted with the German language, I have translated, as literally as possible, all the quotations which occur throughout the lecture.

\* ACT IV. SCENE I.

MOOR.—Hail, thou soil of my fatherland! (*he kisses the earth*) thou blessed sky of my fatherland! Ye fields and hills, ye streams and woods—blessed be you all! How delicious are the breezes from my native mountains!—the air is like balsam to me, the poor fugitive. The golden maytime of my boyhood revives once more in the soul of the outcast. Oh! then I was so happy, so entirely, so serenely happy; and now—there lie the ruins of my frustrated plans.

Meisterbildes zu verschönern — hier hielt er mit himmlischer Music die Hörer die Lüste gefangen — hier an diesem Busch pflückte er Rosen, und die Blumen starben gern unter der Liebenden Fußtritt?

MOOR.—Er ist nicht mehr?

AMALIA.—Er segelt auf ungestümen Meeren — Amalia's Liebe segelt mit ihm — er wandelt durch ungeahnte sandige Wüsten — Amalia's Liebe macht den brennenden Sand unter ihm grünen und die wilden Gesträuche blühn — der Mittag singt sein entblößtes Haupt, nordischer Schnee schrumpft seine Sohlen zusammen, stürmischer Hagel regnet um seine Schläfe, und Amaliens Liebe wiegt ihn in Stürmen ein — Meere und Berge und Horizonte zwischen den Liebenden — aber die Seelen versehen sich aus dem staubigem Kerker und treffen sich im Paradiese der Liebe — Sie scheinen traurig, Herr Graf?

MOOR.—Die Worte der Liebe machen auch meine Liebe lebendig. Sie glaubte mich todt, und blieb treu dem Todtgeglaubten — sie hörte wieder, ich lebe, und opferte mir die Krone einer Heiligen auf. Sie weiß mich in Wüsten irren und im Elend herumschwärmen, und ihre Liebe fliegt durch Wüsten und Elend mir nach. Auch sie heißt Amalia, wie sie, gnädiges Fräulein.

AMALIA.—Wie beneid ich Ihre Amalia!

MOOR.—O, sie ist ein unglückliches Mädchen; ihre Liebe ist für einen, der verloren ist, und wird — ewig niemals belohnt.

AMALIA.—Nein, sie wird im Himmel belohnt. Sagt man nicht, es gebe eine bessere Welt, wo die Traurigen sich freuen und die Liebenden sich wieder erkennen.

MOOR.—Ja, eine Welt, wo die Schleier hinwegfallen und die Liebe sich schrecklich wiederfindet — Ewigkeit heißt ihr Name — meine Amalia ist ein unglückliches Mädchen.

AMALIA.—Unglücklich, und Sie lieben?

MOOR.—Unglücklich, weil sie mich liebt. Wie, wenn ich ein Todtschläger wäre? wie, mein Fräulein, wenn Ihr Geliebter Ihnen für jeden Kuß einen Mord anzählen könnte? Wehe meiner Amalia! sie ist ein unglückliches Mädchen.

AMALIA.—(froh aufhüpftend.) Ha wie bin ich ein glückliches Mädchen! Mein Einziger ist Nachstrahl der Gottheit; und die Gottheit ist Huld und Erbarmen! Nicht eine Fliege konnt er leiden

sehn.—Seine Seele ist so fern von einem blutigen Gedanken, als fern der Mittag von der Mitternacht ist.\*

\* ACT IV. SCENE IV.

KARL.—Ah! you here, honourable lady? and so sad? and a tear on this picture? (*Amalia gives him no answer.*) And who is that happy one for whom the eye of such an angel is silvered with tears? May I look at it? (*He tries to see the picture.*)

AMALIA.—No—yes—no.

KARL (*drawing back*)—And does he deserve such devoted fondness?

AMALIA.—Oh! if you could but have known him!

KARL.—I should have envied him.

AMALIA.—Worshipped him, you should say. You would have so loved him! There was so much, so much in his face—in his eyes—in the tone of his voice—which resembled yours, that I love so dearly. (*Karl casts his eyes to the ground.*) Here, where you stand, he stood a thousand times, and near him one who, by his side, could forget heaven and earth. Here his eyes feasted on the glorious landscape which seemed conscious of his warm, approving look, and to beautify herself yet more under the approbation of her soul's idol. Here he held the airy listeners captive with his heavenly music. Here he plucked roses from this bush, and the flowers died so willingly beneath the lover's tread.

KARL.—And does he live no more?

AMALIA.—He is sailing upon a stormy ocean—Amalia's love sails with him. He is wandering through wild sandy deserts—Amalia's love covers the burning sand with verdure, and the wild thickets with flowers. A tropical sun scorches his face, northern snows benumb his feet, stormy hail beats around his temples—but Amalia's love lulls him to sleep even in the tempests' roar. Oceans, mountains, and horizons separate the lovers; but their souls triumph over this prison-house of dust, and meet in the paradise of love. But, Count, you seem sad!

KARL.—Your words of love rekindle my love. She believed me dead, and remained faithful to him whom she thought no longer breathed; she heard that I lived again, and sacrificed for me a saintly crown; she knows that I wander through deserts, and rove in misery, yet her love follows me through both deserts and misery. Her name, too, like yours, is Amalia.

AMALIA.—How I envy your Amalia.

KARL.—Oh, she is an unhappy girl! her love is for a lost one, and it can never, never be rewarded.

AMALIA.—Not so! it will be rewarded in heaven. Do they not say that there is a better world, where the afflicted rejoice, and where lovers are reunited?

KARL.—Yes, a better world, where the veil is removed, and love will find

He discovers his aged father in the tower of an old castle, where he had been kept hidden by the murderous hands of his son Franz, only to expire heartbroken at the feet of his fallen Karl. Franz, by suicide, alone escapes from his brother's revenge. Amalia is delivered captive into his hands. His direful career of crime rendering him no fit object for the love of his betrothed — betrothed in those days of innocence no longer now to be renewed—they can be united but in death, and to death therefore he himself consigns her ; life is then with him no longer durable—he falls by his own will, thinking to become re-united with his bride in heaven.

In each instance, vice is here shown to result in crime. Franz, urged on by selfishness, gradually undermines the happiness of both father and brother. Karl, actuated solely by revenge, in the pursuit of that absorbing passion tramples on all social and political order. Crime in each instance terminates in ruin ; remorse at having dissolved the natural ties of kindred leads to self-murder ; the misery of existence renders life insupportable. The result shows that in every case wickedness works its own destruction ; that vengeance belongeth only to

itself making startling discoveries,—ETERNITY is its name. My Amalia is an unhappy girl.

AMALIA.—Unhappy ! when loving you ?

KARL.—Unhappy because she loves me ! How if I should be a murderer ? How, Lady Amalia, if your lover could reckon a murder for every kiss he has given you ? Woe to my Amalia, she is an unhappy girl !

AMALIA (*rising joyously*).—Ha, what a happy maid am I ! My lover is a reflex of Deity, and Deity is grace and mercy ! He could not see suffering, even in a fly. His soul is as far exalted above a blood-stained thought, as the north is from the south.

the Lord, and will inevitably consume those who usurp its functions. The moral proves the utter fruitlessness of design when unaided by the soothing influence of human affection.

Already in this early drama we find a sufficient proof of Schiller's great talent for tragedy. Although, as I have already mentioned, the design is rather gross, the materials uncouth, and the language forced, one cannot but entertain a favourable impression of the vivid action and the constant outburst of feelings so essentially true to nature.

"We are alternately shocked and inspired," says Mr. Carlyle; "there is a perpetual conflict between our understanding and our feelings; yet the latter, on the whole, come off victorious. The *Robbers* is a tragedy that will long find readers to astonish, and, with all its faults, to move. It stands, in our imagination, like some ancient rugged pile of a barbarous age; irregular, fantastic, useless; but grand in its height, massiveness, and black frowning strength. It will long remain a singular monument of the early genius and early fortunes of the author." A certain *gusto* of execution more than redeems any poverty of conception; and making every allowance for all exaggerations and enormities, there is still a depth of sentiment which cannot fail to strike a sympathetic chord in the breast of every reader. Indeed, the fact of "The Robbers" having been received with such unbounded applause must be partly attributed to this cause, and to the innate spirit of truth which is breathed throughout.

## CONSEQUENCES OF "THE ROBBERS."

The constant thraldom to which Schiller was subjected was now increased by the jealous distrust of the Duke and his officers. The former had neither the talent to appreciate the beauties in *The Robbers*, nor the sense to detect and make allowances for the exuberant spirit and fire of ardent youth. Schiller privately visited Mannheim to see its first performance, and earnestly pressed the director of the theatre there to take him into his service, and thus rescue him from the hands of his oppressor. The following extracts are taken from his correspondence with this gentleman, Wolfgang von Dalberg.

" And yet I am almost forced to repent the happiest journey of my life ..... No one can be more unhappy than myself. I sufficiently feel my bad condition ; perhaps, also, I sufficiently feel that I merit a better In either point of view I see but one prospect of relief ..... To you I look for the happiness of my life. Now I am little or nothing, nor shall I ever become anything in this arctic zone of taste, unless more blissful stars and a Grecian climate warm me into genuine poetry ..... Could you look into the interior of my soul, and behold the feelings by which I am actuated; could I but paint in true colours how my spirit rebels against the grievances of my condition, you would not, I am sure you would not, one hour delay the aid which an application from you to the Duke will procure me."

His troubles were only just beginning ; six weeks later he writes :—

" Your Excellency will be surprised to hear that in consequence of my last journey to you I have been under arrest for a fortnight ..... If I am not so fortunate as to be with you within

a month or two, all hope of my ever being there will be at an end. Ere then I shall be forced to take a step which will preclude the possibility of my staying at Mannheim."....."I must hurry from here; in the end they might find me a chamber in the Hohenasperg."

Dalberg's interest was as yet unavailing, and Schiller's interview with the Duke produced no satisfactory result. That prince commanded the young surgeon to give all his energies to medicine, and to write nothing without submitting it to *his inspection and literary supervision*. The following extract will show the spirit in which Schiller received this condescending offer of royal tutorship:—

"I have long reckoned my minority to be ended with respect to those matters concerning which they wish to put my spirit under tutelage. My satisfaction is that one can cast away such clumsy manacles: me, at least, they shall not fetter."

The decisive step was at last taken. Goaded to desperation, he seized the opportunity of the arrival of a foreign prince at Stuttgart, to fly secretly from the city, "empty in purse and empty in hope." It was only through the generous aid afforded him by Dalberg that he was able to live, under an assumed name, in Franconia, until he was hospitably received beneath the roof of the Frau von Wollzogen (the mother of a former college companion), who resided at Bauerbach, near Meiningen. Each change of circumstances only added to the comprehensive activity of his mind, which precluded any vain lament over his misfortunes, of which he truly says,

"I know that they do not disgrace me."

Endless were the varieties of criticism bestowed on his first drama, an unfounded report even becoming current that numberless young noblemen had, by its influence, been seduced to brigandage — an exaggeration worthy of the play itself. In after years he allowed that only boyish enthusiasm could atone for the impossibilities and bombast so apparent throughout. He says—

“To escape from trammels which were a torment to me, my heart fled to an ideal world; but, unacquainted with the real one, from which I was separated by iron bars, ignorant of mankind, and unintroduced to the softer sex, my pencil necessarily missed the middle course between angel and devil, and could produce but moral monsters..... Its fault is in presuming to delineate men two years before I had known one.”

Once settled at Bauerbach, and surrounded by kind and sympathising friends, Schiller soon became more contented with the world, and in a few months produced

### *Fiesco,*

in which we still find an individual striving against the world, but in a far more confined sphere. While in “The Robbers” the contest is against the generally received opinions of mankind, in “Fiesco” the struggle after ideal liberty is only against a single state. A gang of robbers formed the materials for the former—the tumult of a revolution supplies a plot for the latter.

Andreas Doria, the first nobleman in the aristocratic republic of Genoa, the founder of her greatness, having attempted to secure the crown for his nephew, the profligate, cruel, and vindictive Gianettino,—a wretch who

even repaid his uncle's kindness with the basest ingratitude,—Fiesco, renowned throughout the whole republic for his virtues and energy, and whose ancestors had twice swayed the sceptre, resolves to rid Genoa of the tyrant, and to abolish the supremacy of his family.

He is aided by all the republican party, and their chief, Verrina, warmly espouses the popular cause, harmonising entirely with Fiesco, until he discovers that that liberator of Genoa, carried away from his original purpose by the inordinate desire of honour, himself aims at the supreme power. Jealous rage at this discovery banishes all warmer feelings; Verrina casts his former friend headlong into the sea, recognising in Doria the man whose dictatorship is best suited for the state. While Fiesco's plot was ripening in all secrecy, Leonora, his high-minded bride, thus beautifully expresses her presentiment of its success—

LEONORE (begeistert).—Und nun mein ihn zu nennen! verwegnes, entseßliches Glück! Mein Genua's größten Mann, (mit Annuth) der vollendet sprang aus dem Meißel der unerschöpflichen Künstlerin, alle Größen seines Geschlechts im lieblichsten Schmelze verband. Höret, Mädchen! Kann ich's doch nun nicht mehr verschweigen! Höret, Mädchen, ich vertraue euch etwas (geheimnissvoll), einen Gedanken: als ich am Altar stand, neben Fiesco, seine Hand in meine gelegt, hatte ich den Gedanken, den zu denken dem Weibe verboten ist: dieser Fiesco, dessen Hand jetzt in der deinigen liegt; dein Fiesco—aber still! daß kein Man uns belausche wie hoch wir uns mit dem Abfall seiner Vortrefflichkeit brüsten—dieser dein Fiesco—Weh euch, wenn das Gefühl euch nicht höher wirft!—wird uns Genua von seinen Tyrannen erlösen.\*

\* ACT I. SCENE I.

LEONORA (with enthusiasm).—What an unutterable, ecstatic delight to

This charming counterpart of Amalia becomes entangled in her husband's fate. She cannot restrain herself from mixing in the rebellious crowd, assumes the hat and mantle of the murdered Gianettino, and is slain by her husband, who mistakes her for that tyrant. This sad scene is depicted with amazing energy—there is something overpowering in such misery and despair accompanying the realisation of fondest hopes.

Fiesco falls into the same error as Karl Moor, for, as the one wrongs those whom he wishes to relieve, so the other, in subduing despotism, himself resolves to become despotic. Therefore no success attends him. Doria remains in power, but not without suffering a just retribution for his selfish ambition, in the loss of the nephew on whose behalf he so vainly schemed.

Schiller has, in a great measure, avoided exaggeration in this play, the materials for which are drawn from the archives of history. We find in the works of Shakespeare, and other great dramatists, that historical characters are invariably more true to nature than those which are merely the offspring of the poet's own excited imagination. Here he takes the first step in that path which tended so much to the glory of his future

call him mine! mine!—the pride of Genoa mine!—he, the rarest product from the hand of that exhaustless artist, Nature—a charming, complete union, combining all perfections of his sex. Hark! maidens, I can no longer conceal it (*mysteriousl*y); I confide to you a thought. When I stood before the altar, Fiesco by my side, his hand in mine, a thought, too daring for a *woman*, took possession of my mind. "This Fiesco, whose hand is now in mine—my own Fiesco"—let no one hear us boast of his pre-eminence—"my own Fiesco"—Oh! that you could but share my feelings—"will rescue Genoa from her tyrants."

career: in recounting the great deeds of history he excites posterity with the desire of emulating the virtues of their ancestry. But history furnishes nothing to the poet without demanding a large tribute of talent in return. The picturing of a single prominent character is doubtless rendered more easy, but the greatest difficulty is experienced in grouping the minor personages round that centre. The delineations in "Fiesco" are a remarkable improvement on those in "The Robbers," but this concentration is here not yet so well accomplished as in his other dramatic writings. There can be little doubt but that he well knew and availed himself of the stormy night in King Lear, but he does not seem to have yet met with the lovely scenes in Romeo and Juliet.

The historical catastrophe is altered to suit Schiller's purpose, but its effect is truly solemn. "The midnight silence of the sleeping city, interrupted only by the distant sounds of watchmen, by the low hoarse murmur of the sea, or the stealthy footsteps or disguised voice of Fiesco, is conveyed to our imagination by a few brief touches. At length the gun is fired, and the wild uproar which ensues is no less strikingly exhibited."

In his third drama,

### **Plot and Passion,**

which was produced within a year, Schiller again had recourse to ideal conception in preference to historical fact, but, when compared with "The Robbers," we find in its tragical development a steady improvement; it is

not, like it, based entirely on fictitious ground, for "Kabale and Liebe" is a true picture of domestic life, as exemplified in two families.

Major Ferdinand, the son of noble parents in a minor German state, is enamoured of the beautiful Louisa, a citizen's daughter—notwithstanding his father's especial desire that he should be united to the Lady Milford, a lady of old English descent, who has fallen a victim to the arts of the reigning prince, but is, nevertheless, of a most exalted character. Ferdinand is much attracted by the high-minded woman of his father's choice, whose magnanimity and heroism are so analogous to his own noble nature; but still, Louisa's image is too fondly impressed upon his heart to be supplanted by another's. The father, careless of the means taken to secure his end, makes his son jealous of the unfortunate Louisa, who, to save her father's life, is forced to assist in her own ruin, and Ferdinand now suspects his betrothed with the same intensity as he formerly trusted her. Entangled and blinded by his enemies' cunning, he, Samson-like, hurls down to destruction both himself, his father, and his betrothed.

In "Kabale and Liebe" the contrast is strikingly exhibited between the vice and frivolity of court life at that period, and the comparatively virtuous condition of the oppressed and despised order of citizens. This life-like picture of a state of things where the privileged dare everything, and the masses of the people must constantly endure every species of insult at the hands of the few, produced a marked impression upon the political world;

nobility of mind was justly pronounced preferable to nobility of birth; and this feeling rapidly gained ground in all orders of society.—We likewise find in the drama a powerful contest between love and honour. Each rank in society is prompted by innate pride to preserve its own integrity and identity, and to avoid intercourse with the others. Even when unactuated by aversion, the several orders are kept distinct by a sense of honour; and if affection should overstep this barrier, still rank becomes a sad hindrance to love, which it cannot, however, subdue. This struggle between heart and rank is brought prominently forward in "Plot and Passion," for the usages of society prevent the union of those two loving hearts, despite the deep, pure, and ardent affection by which they both were actuated. This is indeed the very acme of tragedy.

The principal charm of this, for a long time one of Germany's most favoured dramas, lies in the delineation of the characters of Ferdinand and Louisa. Few passages are more charming, although very melancholy, than that where Ferdinand, doubting Louisa's virtue, administers to her and to himself the poisoned bowl. A grand but dark solemnity is expressed in his despair, for, although apparently overwhelmed, he is still impregnable. It also rivals its predecessors in striking beauty of diction and description.

Before proceeding to the second period of Schiller's life, I must offer a few remarks upon the poems which had, up to this time, issued from his pen. In his

**Early Poems,**

we find a somewhat similar spirit to that contained in the youthful productions of Lord Byron. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, their talented translator, says that in them "lies the life and beats the heart of Schiller. They conduct us through the various stages of his spiritual education, and indicate each step in the progress. In this division, effect is no less discernible than power; both in language and thought there is a struggle at something not yet achieved, and not, perhaps, even yet definite and distinct to the poet himself. Here may be traced, (though softened by the charms of genius, which softens all things,) the splendid errors that belong to a passionate youth, and that gave such distorted grandeur to the giant melodrama of 'The Robbers.' But here are to be traced also, and in far clearer characters, the man's strong heart, essentially human in its sympathies—the thoughtful and earnest intellect, giving ample promise of all it was destined to receive." Many of the early poems are very obscure in their meaning and, in some instances, not a little extravagant, but never *affectedly* so. The sonnets to Laura, his early love, are very exquisite, and bear comparison with the finest stanzas of Byron. The "Infanticide" is much and justly esteemed, and depicts a complete drama in a few lines. We here see the dawn of Schiller's mighty power in discriminating the *actor* from the *act*. We hate the *crime* whilst compassionating the unfortunate

*criminal.* We pity and stand in awe of the *doer* — we detest the *deed*. I subjoin two of the most striking verses:—

Und das Kindlein — in der Mutter Schoße  
 Lag es da in füßer, goldener Ruh',  
 In dem Reiz der jungen Morgenrose  
 Lachte mir der holde Kleine zu —  
 Tödtlichlieblich sprach aus allen Zügen  
 Sein geliebtes theures Bild mich an,  
 Den hellkommen Mutterbusen wiegen  
 Liebe und — Verzweiflungswahn.

• • • • •  
 Seht! da lag's entseelt zu meinen Füßen,  
 Kult hinstarrend, mit verworrnen Sinn  
 Sah ich seines Blutes Ströme fliessen,  
 Und mein Leben floß mit ihm dahin; —  
 Schrecklich pocht schon des Gerichtes Vöte,  
 Schrecklicher mein Herz!  
 Freudig eil' ich in dem kalten T:  
 Auszulöschen meinen Flammenschmerz.

\* The following translation of these stanzas is by Bulwer:—

And there the Babe! there, on the mother's bosom,  
 Lull'd in its sweet and golden rest it lay:  
 Fresh in life's morning as a rosy blossom,  
 It smiled, poor harmless one, my tears away.  
 Deathlike yet lovely, every feature speaking  
 In such dear calm and beauty to my sadness,  
 And my heart cradled, — cradled still, in breaking,  
 The soft'ning love and the despairing madness.

• • • • •  
 Lifeless — how lifeless! — see, oh see, before me  
 It lies cold — stiff! — O God! — and with that blood  
 I feel, as swoops the dizzy darkness o'er me,  
 Mine own life mingled — ebbing in the flood.  
 Fire, quench thy tortures in the icy grave!  
 Hark, at the door they knock — more loud within me—  
 More awful still — its sound the dread heart gave!  
 Gladly I welcome the cold arms that win me.—

We now come to that period in Schiller's life when he was enabled to carry into execution his long cherished scheme of devoting all his time and energies to literature.

## SECOND PERIOD.

(1783-1787.)

### REMOVAL TO MANNHEIM.

The success of these three dramas obtained for Schiller the long coveted post of poet to the theatre at Mannheim, where he settled in 1783. His suspicious fear and distrust of the Government at Stuttgart was soon quieted by his being recognised as a subject of the Elector Palatine. To the world of letters he now resolved exclusively to devote himself. He writes—

“ All my ties are broken. The public is now my all ; my study, my sovereign, my confidant. To it alone will I listen. To this and no other tribunal will I submit myself. The public I alone dread and reverence. Something powerfully forces upon me the resolve to bear no other fetters than those imposed by the world ; to appeal to no other throne than the soul of man.”

This was a period of transition, both mental and corporeal ; for, after his removal to Mannheim, we find a great change in Schiller's taste and heart. He had now passed through that ordeal which almost invariably awaits dawning genius—an era of doubt and

self-conflict, of gloom and self-torture. This trial was peculiarly severe to one of Schiller's warm and impassioned temperament; the victory once won, the reaction was proportionally grand and decisive. Duty now no longer wars with his inclination; both lead him in the same path, and urge him on to obtain his true height and destination. Now, for the first time, he sees he has to obey no dictates but his own; and this freedom from control produced in him a great activity—an activity which realised many long-cherished schemes. Biography furnishes us with, alas! too many instances of noble souls who have perished in their attempts to live by literature, and Schiller seems to have been truly thankful for his delivery from a condition which had proved fatal to so many kindred spirits. He had, however, to thank energy rather than chance for this happy change. Many literary failures are attributable to want of perseverance, concentration, and resolution; but as Schiller possessed all these qualities in no ordinary degree, he enjoyed a better fate. We find a firm steadiness of purpose throughout all his writings.

At Mannheim Schiller diligently studied the leading French and English dramatists, and, besides his other duties, translated Shakspeare's "Macbeth," and some French plays, for the theatre. In 1785 he published the first number of the *Rheinische Thalia*, a periodical which he continued, with little interruption, for nine years. It was chiefly devoted to the discussion and improvement of dramatic literature, but in it also appeared his

### Philosophical Letters.

which are written with more power than originality. Any discussion on Schiller's philosophy ought more properly to be introduced in the third period of his life, when, at Jena, he was elaborately studying Kant; but as his essays upon that subject are of far too abstruse a nature to admit of criticism here, I must content myself with a few words upon his general opinions.

The study of Schiller cannot but lead to the conviction that his was an essentially religious mind, notwithstanding that his creed at that early period of his life was a sort of mystical deism. The Supernaturalists and Spinozists were then carrying on an active war of opinions, and, after refuting both their theories, he adopted a creed of his own, in which faith and reason embrace. That creed was — "The universe is a thought of God's." His doubts and scepticism resulted, doubtless, as happens in too many other instances, from his keen sympathy with undeserved suffering, a fierce resentment against triumphant wickedness, and a consequent gloomy conflict and sad inquiry into a system where such anomalies were permitted. But such an inquisitive spirit as his was not contented with *doubts*; religion was with him a fearful but all-important mystery, which held continued possession of his thoughts. His early inquiries were attended with but small success, but still a happy change for the better is observable about this time. He has not furnished us with an account of his after pro-

gress, but there cannot be a doubt that he was entirely orthodox — his mind is too apparent in his works to admit of a contrary suspicion. An impulsive and ardent genius has mostly to struggle long and earnestly in order to free itself from the harassing uncertainties and awful darkness overhanging the fate of man ; but a few objectionable passages, written while that struggle was going on, cannot be regarded as proofs of infidelity. Schiller invariably exalts ideal belief above real wisdom ; faith above worldly intellect ; emotion above the stern realities of life. The hatred of all restraint, evidenced in *The Robbers*, is calmed down in his later poems and dramas to a serene and respectful toleration for received opinions and sanctioned customs. He himself says " that the sun reflects itself not on the stormy ocean, but on the placid, glassy stream" — so his real sentiments must be looked for in his mature, not in his early works.

In the first number of the *Thalia* were inserted the first three acts of *Don Carlos*, which procured for Schiller the title of " Counsellor " to the Duke of Saxe Weimar, and numberless gratifying testimonials. Some of the most flattering of these were from Leipzig, whither he shortly removed, resolving to renounce housekeeping and solitude. He was contemplating marriage, but the Laura whom he was leaving was not destined to be his bride. Within a few months he settled at Dresden, where he had many true friends — amongst others, Körner, with whose father he resided. Here was completed and published, in 1786,

**Don Carlos.**

His altered sentiments may be clearly traced in this drama — sentiments still coloured throughout with the poetical melancholy of a youth on the verge of manhood, yet mingled with a touching and overwhelming pathos, calculated to soften every heart. Schiller obtained thousands of warm admirers by this tragedy, which still kept increasing in popularity, even after it was followed by far finer specimens of his writings.

In *The Robbers* the hero is hurried blindly from crime to crime; in *Fiesco*, republicanism leads to rapine and murder; in *Kabale and Liebe* are depicted the horrors of court life; but in *Don Carlos* we find the magnanimous philanthropy of a *Citizen of the World*, side by side with the senseless rule of a despotic sovereign. The monarch is likewise contrasted with his son, Don Carlos, the hereditary prince of Spain, who is inspired already when at school with an ideal of civil and religious liberty. This early endowed and beautifully organised soul, joined to the riches of a most benevolent heart, enthusiastic in the pursuit of all that is noble and sublime,— this royal mind, imbued with delicacy, courage, and magnanimity, is, nevertheless, sadly deficient in that worldly wisdom, so indispensable to such an exalted position. In the characters of Philip and his son is reflected, as from a mirror, the political schism which shook to its foundations the Spanish dominion; and in order the more clearly dramatically to illustrate this dissension Schiller has

founded it upon a family dispute. Elizabeth of Valois, betrothed to Don Carlos, but united to his father, is still beloved by the former; and his affection is innocently requited. The Marquis of Posa, a Maltese, who from long travel and intimate study has gained a clear insight into mankind, and foresees the sanguinary issue of the disputes in the Netherlands, resolves to assist that movement to the utmost, and obtains the cooperation in the first instance of the Infant and his mother, both friends of liberty. A wonderful accident, which is at once turned to his own purposes by the Marquis, seems to offer him a favourable opportunity of furthering his schemes. As is often the case, extremes meet. He is introduced to Philip, and the bigoted, all-powerful, and relentless king, unused to hear the word *liberty* breathed in his presence, is struck with admiration at the warm enthusiast, loads him with honours, and gives him an unlimited power in the royal palace. But when his plans seem ripe for execution, they are suddenly deserted, in order to save his beloved Carlos, who is threatened with his father's jealous revenge. He resolves to sacrifice his own life in order to preserve that of his friend—allows his schemes to become known to Philip, by whom he is assassinated. Posa previously commits the realisation of his hopes to Carlos, and supplicates the Queen to use her influence to the same end, and to urge the Prince to fulfil that mission. The parting interview is beautifully pourtrayed. Posa says—

Die Wahl war schnell und schrecklich.  
Einer war verloren,

Und ich will dieser Eine seine.

Er mache das Traumbild wahr,  
Das kühne Traumbild eines neuen Staates,  
Der Freundschaft göttliche Geburt.

Ich Menschenglück auf seine Seele lege,  
Europas Verhängniß reift in meinem großen Freunde

Jetzt sterb' ich beruhigt,— meine  
Arbeit ist gethan.\*

In a subsequent interview with his mother, Don Carlos promises to create a paradise of liberty in the Netherlands, over the ashes of his friend; but his promises were in vain—he too falls, beneath the iron sway of the Inquisition. The son is delivered up for execution by the father. At the close of that very meeting the vision was cruelly dispelled, but not until it had been so vividly dreamt as almost to have become realised.

The full power of the mighty Charles V. had not succeeded in subduing the first struggle for freedom of

\* ACT IV. SCENE XXI.

MARQUIS.—The choice was prompt and fearful;  
One of us must die,  
And I must be that one.

Oh! may he realise my vision,  
The bold dream of a new—a perfect state,  
A divine offspring of our friendship.

Upon his soul I cast the happiness of man,  
In him must Europe's fortune ripen.

Content I die,— my  
Work is done.

thought and conscience ; but still in Philip's reign the independence, or even the existence, of the new church was not secured, because not yet recognised. It fell to the lot of the Dutch to attain that glorious end. The fate of this great empire, her opening struggle for the happiness of mankind, and that development of the human mind impossible while bound by the fetters of Romanism, form the materials for this drama. Spanish despotism, allied with Papal cruelty, is in contention with that Protestant freedom then spreading from Germany over all Europe, and which, rising as a glorious sun of liberty over the Low Countries, forms the background of this powerful tragedy. The idea is presented of the poor contrast afforded by the Romish dependence upon outward forms and ceremonies, when compared with that spiritual faith in our blessed Saviour's atonement upon which alone the Protestant creed is founded. The aim of the latter being to free the State from the despotic influence exercised by the former, the contest of the two was naturally both religious and political. The Marquis, although not himself a Protestant, represents that Protestant ideality so soon to be achieved, and to secure which he contended simultaneously with Philip II., Alba, Domingo, and the Inquisition. That bright, but, alas ! brief and delusive, hope of Philip's indulgence to Posa's principles, forms the crisis of the drama. Then cloud and tempest gradually envelope the scene, and a death-like darkness at last obscures the eclipsed hopes of freedom ; eclipsed because of their advocates' want of energy and consistency ; darkened

on account of that one flaw in so beautiful a system: blackened, however, by a cloud with a silver lining, soon to dawn in fresh and successful exertions. We accompany our hero on his bright but narrow path along a fearful precipice, down which we momentarily expect his headlong fall. We cannot, however, but breathlessly hope even against hope, until the dreadful moment has at last arrived. We mark his failing courage and tottering steps, his dream-like imagination, but little calculated for so perilous an enterprise—and we cannot but foresee the sad and inevitable event. The noblest feelings of our nature are excited on his behalf, warmer and warmer becomes our sympathy, until its object sinks to rise no more.

My space compels me to forego any criticism upon the other characters, all of whom are so charmingly delineated as to give to this drama the undoubted stamp of transcendent genius. I allude briefly to the Queen only. How beautifully has Schiller pourtrayed her! her every thought pure and holy! soft and feminine! her every action accompanied by dignity and reliance upon her own integrity—so young, so sad, so beautiful! We cannot but revere and love her.

The only fault we can discern in *Don Carlos* is a slight confusion at the termination, and a want of unity. This is attributed by Schiller to the different parts having been completed at long intervals. Genuine passion teems throughout this the most dramatic of his plays, which is truly noble in thought and heroic

in character. Its situations are as striking as they are complicated.

Notwithstanding the unparalleled success of this production, its author seems, at this period of his life, to have been very unsettled in his plans. The drama daily held a less important place in his estimation. In it he had already obtained eminence, if not supremacy. Poetry was not calculated to engross all his energies. Many schemes were planned and successively abandoned — amongst others the composition of a novel called

### *The Ghost-seer,*

two volumes of which, however, were published. The idea seems to have been aroused by a certain Parisian magician, who was at that time astonishing the Continent with his quackery. An amiable, weak-minded prince is secured to the Romish Church by a series of clever plots and tricks; a very tolerable knowledge of experimental philosophy being shown in the development of the latter.

I cannot refrain from here giving the reader a short extract from a letter which Schiller penned about this time to his friend Schwann, which furnishes us with a very clear insight into his feelings. He says:—

“ I have now been in Weimar for nearly nine months, having at last accomplished the journey after finishing my *Carlos*. Honestly speaking, I cannot but say that I am exceedingly contented with the place; my reasons are obvious. The utmost political tranquillity and freedom, well disposed people, social intercourse but little restrained, a select circle of interesting persons and thinking heads, respect for literary diligence, added to

the economy to me of such a town as Weimar—why should I not be satisfied? With Wieland I am pretty intimate, and to him I must attribute no small portion of my present happiness; for I like him, and believe that he likes me in return. My intercourse with Herder is more limited, though I value him highly as a writer and as a man. This results solely from capricious chance, for happy omens attended the opening of our acquaintance. Neither have I time to act according to my likings ..... Göthe is still only *expected* from Italy."

I will stop here in order to say a few words on Schiller's

#### ACQUAINTANCE WITH GÖTHE,

which forms a most pleasing episode in his history. On the return of the latter from Rome the long anticipated meeting took place — a meeting of the romantic with the sublime. Of it Schiller says :—

" On the whole, a personal meeting has not diminished the idea, great as it was, which I had previously formed of Göthe; but I doubt whether we shall ever be in close communication. Much which is interesting to me has had its day with him. His nature is differently constructed from mine, even in its foundation; his world is not my world; our conceptions of the same things differ entirely. No firm, substantial intimacy can result from such a combination. Time will try."

How natural this, in a comparative novice, when speaking of a literary star who had long ranked as a constellation! How probable that the result would fail to verify his prediction. We find, however, that the matured and sobered Göthe at first laboured under the same impression. He avoided Schiller, in consequence of his objections to the plan of *The Robbers*, resisted the efforts of mutual friends, and was confirmed in his decision on the appear-

ance of *Carlos*. Union was not to be dreamt of, but by degrees each found that an alliance was possible and desirable—characters bearing but little resemblance to each other are often found most capable of a lasting friendship. Once concluded, it remained unbroken, and produced much benefit to both. How delightful it must have been to see the gifted and admired author of *Faust* drawing out the excellencies of his no less gifted and no less admired, but retiring friend. Their minds were too great for rivalry. Göthe did his utmost to forward Schiller's plans, and their friendship grew warmer and warmer, until death put an end to it. By Göthe's side, there commenced for Schiller a new, a more radiant youth.

In 1788 appeared the first volume of the

### **Revolt of the Netherlands,**

which, had it been finished, would undoubtedly rank as the greatest historical work which Germany has ever produced. It gave ample scope for Schiller's versatile genius, and did much to form and settle the language of his native country. I shall speak of his historical style hereafter, and content myself at present with translating one short extract, describing the passage of Alba's army to the Netherlands :—

“ The army crossed the Alps of Savoy by regular stages, completing the dangerous passage on the fourteenth day. A French army of observation accompanied it side by side, along the frontiers of Dauphiné and the course of the Rhone, and the allied Genevese army followed it on the right, being passed at a distance

of only seven miles. Both armies of observation carefully abstained from any act of hostility, and were intended merely to cover their own frontiers. As the Spanish legions ascended and descended the steep mountain sides, or as they crossed the rapid Iser, or file by file wound through the narrow rocky passes, a single handful of men would have sufficed to stop their march and to drive them back into the fastnesses, where they must irretrievably have perished, since at no place was more than one day's provisions provided, and that for only a third part of the entire force. Supernatural awe and dread of the Spanish name, however, seemed to blind the eyes of the enemy, who either did not perceive their advantage, or at least failed to profit by it. In order that they might have as little opportunity as possible of remembering it, the Spanish general hastened through the dangerous pass. Assured, likewise, that if his troops gave the slightest offence, he was lost, the strictest discipline was maintained throughout the march, not a peasant's hut, not a field being injured; and never, probably, in the history of the world, was so numerous an army led so far in such excellent order. Destined, as the force was, for vengeance and slaughter, a malignant and baleful star seemed to lead it through every danger, and it would be difficult to determine whether the prudence of its general, or the blindness of its enemy, is the most surprising."

Before proceeding to the third period of Schiller's life, we must turn our attention to his

### **Poems, 1784-90.**

Menzel, the historian, remarks that "Schiller's poetical creations have had, beyond the province of art, an immediate effect upon life itself. The mighty charm of his song has not only touched the imaginations of men, but even their consciences; and the fiery zeal with which he entered into conflict with all that is base and vulgar, the

holy enthusiasm with which he vindicated the acknowledged rights and the insulted dignity of man, more frequently and victoriously than any before him, make his name illustrious, not only among the poets, but among the noblest sages and heroes, who are dear to mankind."

The poems in this transitory period of his career are few in number, but remarkable for their beauty. They are evidently the production of a mind overflowing with bold and grand conceptions. We find them at once more vigorous and more real; for, no longer carried away by the ardent excitement of youth, Schiller now devoted more time to contemplation and the acquisition of a knowledge of the world.

In *The Conflict* and *Resignation* are presented a sad view of the struggles after truth in a noble and virtuous soul. I have already spoken sufficiently of Schiller's religious character to guard the reader against misconstruing those passages in the *Gods of Greece*, which might appear as a defence of paganism. No one, after reading the subjoined stanzas from the "Hymn to Joy," would persevere in such an opinion.

Freude heißt die starke Feder  
In der ewigen Natur.  
Freude, Freude treibt die Räder  
In der großen Weltenuhr.  
Blumen lockt sie aus den Keimen,  
Sonnen aus dem Firmament,  
Sphären rollt sie in den Räumen,  
Die des Sehers Rohr nicht kennt.  
  
Aus der Wahrheit Feuerspiegel  
Lächelt sie den Forscher an.

Zu den Tugend freilem Hügel  
Leitet sie des Dulders Bahn.  
Auf des Glaubens Sonnenberge  
Sicht man ihre Fahnen wehn,  
Durch den Riß gesprengter Särge  
Sie im Chor der Engel fehn.  
Festen Muth in schwerem Leiden,  
Hülse, wo die Unschuld weint,  
Ewigkeit geschworenen Eiden,  
Wahrheit gegen Freund und Feind,  
Männerstolz vor Königsthronen —  
Brüder, gält' es Gut und Blut —  
Dem Verdienste seine Kronen,  
Untergang der Lügenbrut!\*

\* Bulwer has thus translated these beautiful lines :—

Joy is the mainspring in the whole  
Of endless Nature's calm rotation ;  
Joy moves the dazzling wheels that roll  
In the great Timepiece of Creation ;  
Joy breathes on buds, and flowers they are ;  
Joy beckons—suns come forth from heaven ;  
Joy rolls the spheres in realms afar,  
Ne'er to thy glass, dim Wisdom, given !  
Joy from Truth's pure and lambent fires,  
Smiles out upon the ardent seeker ;  
Joy lends to Virtue Man's desires,  
And cheers as Suffering's step grows weaker.  
High from the sunny slopes of Faith  
The gales her waving banners buoy ;  
And through the shatter'd vaults of Death,  
Lo, 'mid the choral Angels—Joy.  
Firm mind to bear what Fate bestows ;  
Comfort to tears in sinless eyes ;  
Faith kept alive with Friends and Foes ;  
Man's Oath eternal as the skies ;  
Manhood—the thrones of Kings to girth,  
At whatsoever cost the prize ;  
Success to Merit's honest worth ;  
Perdition to the Brood of Lies !

The origin of the matchless ode from which the above verses are quoted invests it with an additional charm. Schiller was the means of rescuing a poor half-starved student from self-destruction, and of raising a subscription which enabled him to continue his studies and obtain a government appointment. Elated with his success he penned this hymn.

In spite of Mr. Carlyle's assertion to the contrary, the "Epistle to a Married Man, by a Fellow-sufferer," is sufficient evidence that Schiller had a decided talent for original comedy, had he chosen to exercise it. Schiller himself thus writes on the subject :—

"Indeed I consider myself more equal to this comedy [referring to one which he never finished], where it approaches rather to a ludicrous narration of facts, than to a combination of comic characters and humour. But my nature is so inclined to *earnest*, that what has no depth cannot long interest me."

Many of the most elaborate poems are devoted to tracing the progress of civilisation, and have been designated *Culture-Historic*. It is not these, however, but his lyrics, which nearest approach perfection; indeed the latter are like himself—*truth beautified*.

Numerous as were Schiller's occupations about this time, excellence was obtained in each. We are told that he always completely mastered a subject in his own mind before he commenced committing it to paper; that he wrote with wonderful rapidity, and mostly by night, in order to be free from all interruptions. Fond of solitude, he would wander for hours on the banks of

the Elbe ; nor did he ever lose his early predilection for thunderstorms and tempests. Whatever was grand in nature was in consonance with his restless but gigantic mind.

## THIRD PERIOD.

(1787-1805.)

## REMOVAL TO JENA.

AFTER *Don Carlos* had been finished, Schiller stayed (1787) at Weimar, where his three great contemporaries, Wieland, Herder, and Göthe, resided. He is now thirty years of age, a husband and a professor. The "Laura," to whom so many of his prettiest early poems are addressed, was no fiction, but a loved and loving reality, who long held sole possession of Schiller's heart. She was the daughter of his valued friend, Schwann, from whom her hand was solicited. Married, however, they were not, and we are not informed why. Another image had now supplanted her's. While on a pleasure journey, he became attached to Charlotte von Lengefeld, a lady of rank, and of a most noble character. To let her have an insight into his inmost self, he spent a whole summer near her home, in Rudolstadt, where, however, he was very actively employed. He was here allured by the study of Greek, concerning which he says:—

"I read hardly anything now but Homer; the ancients afford me true enjoyment. Moreover, I require them in the highest degree, in order to purify my own taste, which, acted upon by subtlety, artificialness, and witticism, begins to deviate from the path of true simplicity."

The home of his future wife was now his daily resort. He writes thence:—

"My departure from Rudolstadt is, indeed, become a painful step. I have spent many blissful days there, and have established a very dear bond of friendship."

Having returned to Weimar in November, 1788, he was appointed, by Göthe's intercession, professor of history at the university of Jena. Schiller's wedding took place on the 20th of February, 1790, and he soon experienced, to use his own words, that—

"Life is quite another thing by the side of a beloved wife, than when forsaken and alone. I look with a glad mind around me; an harmonious composure pervades my existence, which is neither strained nor impassioned, but peaceful and clear. I look to my future destiny with a cheerful heart; fate has conquered the difficulties for me; in a few years I shall again live in full enjoyment of my spirits, my very youth will be renewed—renewed by an inward poetic life."

After his marriage, he lived in the closest intimacy with the elder Humboldt, and his friendship with Göthe became still more cordial, just when both had arrived at the highest point of their intellectual development, and seemed only to need each other's help in order to approach perfection.

History was now necessarily uppermost in Schiller's thoughts, and to its study he committed himself with unwearied diligence. He writes:—

"You can scarcely believe how contented I am with my new undertaking. The possession of so great and uncultivated a field has for me so many charms. With each stride I gain a new idea, and my soul expands with its sphere."

Within a year appeared the

### ***History of the Thirty Years' War,***

which indelibly stamps him as a great historian. His aim was so to arrange his materials that they should, unaided by decoration, interest all nations—to represent remarkable events as important to man. However subject to criticism this *theory* might be, his performance was eminently successful; but still I cannot but think it to excel in those portions written rather for Germany than for the world—its picturesque incidents, tinted with patriotic sentiment, being more interesting to the general reader than those portions where generalisation only produces confusion. The religious importance attached to the period which it describes increases our interest in this vigorous and energetic work. Wallenstein and Gustavus are very forcibly described, so forcibly that I cannot refrain from translating the passages which picture the latter's death in so masterly a manner:—

"At last the dreaded morning dawned, but an impenetrable fog, which lay over the field, delayed the attack till noon. Kneeling in front of his lines, the King offered up his devotions, and the entire army, at the same moment, dropping on their right knees, burst into a moving hymn, military music accompanying their singing. The King then mounted his horse, clad only in a buff jerkin and surtout (a slight wound preventing him from wearing armour), and rode through the ranks, animating the

courage of his troops to a joyous confidence, which, however, his own foreboding bosom contradicted. 'God with us!' was the war-cry of the Swedes; 'Jesu Maria!' that of the Imperialists. About eleven the fog began to disperse, and Wallenstein's army became visible. The flames of Lutzen were seen at the same moment, the town having been set on fire by command of the Duke, to prevent his being outflanked on that side. At length the charge was sounded, the cavalry dashed upon the enemy, and the infantry advanced against the trenches.

“ In the meantime the King's right wing, led by himself, had fallen upon the enemy's left. The first impetuous onset of the heavy Finland cuirassiers scattered the lightly mounted Poles and Croats who were stationed here, and their tumultuous flight spread terror and confusion amongst the rest of the cavalry. At this moment notice was brought the King that his infantry would probably be driven from the trenches they had stormed, and that his left, exposed to a tremendous fire from the windmills, was beginning to give way. With rapid decision he committed to Horn the task of pursuing the already routed left of the enemy, himself hastening, at the head of the regiment of Steinbock, to repair the confusion of his own. His gallant charger bore him with the speed of lightning over the trenches, but the squadrons that followed could not come on so rapidly, and none but a few horsemen, among whom was the Duke of Saxe Lauenberg, were able to keep pace with the King. He galloped right to the place where his infantry was most closely pressed, and while reconnoitring to discover an exposed point for attack, his short-sightedness unfortunately led him too close to the enemy's lines. An imperial Gefreyter, observing that all respectfully made room for the advancing horseman, immediately ordered a musketeer to fire on him. 'Aim at *him* yonder,' said he, 'that must be a man of consequence.' The soldier fired, and the King's left arm was shattered by the ball. At that moment the cavalry came hurrying up, and a confused cry of 'The King bleeds!' 'The King is wounded!' spread horror and consternation through their ranks. 'It is nothing, follow me,' cried the King, collecting his whole strength; but overcome by pain, and nearly fainting,

he requested the Duke of Lauenberg, in French, to lead him unobserved from the tumult. While the Duke turned towards the right, making a wide circuit to conceal the accident from the desponding infantry, the King received a second wound in his back, which took away his remaining strength. 'Brother,' said he, with a dying voice, 'I have got enough, haste, save thyself. At this moment he fell from his horse, pierced by several other shots, and, far from his attendants, he breathed his last amid the plundering hands of the Croats. His charger flying without its rider, and bathed in blood, soon made known to the Swedes the fall of their King. They rush madly forward to rescue his remains from the hands of the enemy, and a murderous conflict ensues around the corpse, until his mangled remains are buried beneath a heap of slain.

"The mournful tidings speedily run through the Swedish army, but instead of deadening the courage of these brave troops, they but arouse it to a new, a fierce, consuming flame. Life lessens in value, since the most sacred life of all is gone; death has lost its terrors for the lowly, since it has not spared the anointed head.

"The sun was setting as the two lines closed. The strife grew warmer as it drew to an end, the last efforts were exerted to the utmost on either side; skill and valour did their best to repair the fortune of the day. In vain! all are embued with superhuman strength, none conquer, none give way. The powers of war are exhausted on one side, only to display some novel, some untried masterpiece on the other. Night and obscurity at last put an end to the battle, long before the fury of either side is exhausted. The contest ceases only when antagonists can no longer be found. The trumpets sound; the armies separate as if by tacit consent, each claiming the victory.

"But how dear a conquest, how sad a triumph! Not till the fury of the battle was over can they feel the full weight of their loss. The shout of victory dies away in mute, gloomy despair. He who led them to the charge returned not with them; he lies on his victorious field, mingled with the bodies of the humble

slain. After a long and almost fruitless search, his corpse was found near the great stone which, for a hundred years, had stood between Lutzen and the Merseberg canal, but which, from the memorable disaster of that day, has always borne the name of *the stone of the Swede*. Covered with wounds and blood, so as scarcely to be recognised, trampled beneath the horses' hoofs, stripped by rude hands of its ornaments and clothes, he is drawn from beneath a heap of dead, carried to Weissenfels, and there delivered to the lamentations of his troops, and the last embraces of his queen. The first tribute to revenge is paid; the monarch's blood has been atoned with blood; love once more resumes her rights, and tears of grief are shed for the man. Individual woe is absorbed in universal sorrow. Stupefied by this overwhelming blow, the generals stand speechless and motionless around his bier, and no one trusts himself to conceive the full extent of his loss."

Schiller's historic powers were not, however, limited to description. Great thoughts are apparent in every page, and this is the finest historical production of which Germany can boast; but it would have been equalled, if not excelled, if its author had ever finished his *Revolt of the Netherlands*.

Soon after its completion, Schiller was prostrated by a disease in the chest, from the effects of which he never entirely recovered. Idle he never was, for even during his illness he adopted with ardour the philosophy of Kant, which was at that time revolutionising the world of thought. He penned some most important and profound æsthetic essays, which, however, my space will not permit me to notice here.

The *History of the Thirty Years' War* suggested Wallenstein as a hero. For seven years he laboured upon this, one of his greatest productions. This vast trilogy

exhibits a more powerful mastery over materials than his other dramas, and in

### • *Wallenstein*

we find Schiller still more free than heretofore from those violent emotions so conspicuous in his earlier works. This must be attributed to his increased study of history and philosophy, and, in a still greater measure, to his friendly intercourse with Göthe. History taught him the true and safe medium between reason and sentiment; philosophy freed his mind from those confused impressions, so antagonistic to the intuitive clearness of thought; Göthe aided still more his study of mankind, and the separation of the real from the ideal. From this period tragedies issued from Schiller's pen, which have been truly stated as second only to Shakspeare's in vividness of conception and powerful execution.

The choice of *Wallenstein* as material for his fifth drama was very happy, as it embraces a most eventful period in both political and ecclesiastical history, abounding in startling events, warlike incidents, noble deeds, and conflicting ideas, and giving ample scope for the display of Schiller's gigantic talents. "Wallenstein" consists of three parts, the "Camp," the "Piccolomini," and the "General's Death;" and in it are depicted, side by side, mysterious astrological converse and amusing camp scenes; the wild tumult of war, and the honeyed accents of love; solemn, remorseless, and triumphant death, and youthful, ardent, and aspiring life.

A cursory glance at the “Thirty Years’ War” is necessary for the full appreciation of the narrative. That war was essentially one of creeds, of light against darkness. The new church offered facilities for obtaining general education, and thereby eminence and wealth ; expecting only, in return, that its members would avail themselves of that advantage for the benefit, not only of themselves, but also of the State. But when fame was acquired and riches amassed solely for self-aggrandisement, and unprompted by patriotism, their owner might, by these means, become dangerous to the interests of the state. Such was the position of Wallenstein, who wielded power but for the furtherance of his own selfish purposes—even going so far as to betray his master, in hopes of obtaining the Bohemian crown. His ambition accelerates his ruin, and opposes him at every turn, enveloping him in its folds, as the serpents did Laocoon. Wallenstein’s bosom friend, the younger Piccolomini, becomes enamoured of his daughter, Thekla, for whom her father has far higher aspirations. Sad, indeed, is the lovers’ position after the General declares his treasonable designs, and thus forces Max to become his opponent. The elder Piccolomini has long since embraced the Emperor’s cause, and now plots the destruction of his former patron. Death is the only escape from these conflicting torments ; he can neither aid his father nor oppose the friend of his youth ; he therefore ends his life in the ranks of the Swedish enemy—the first and fairest victim ! Wallenstein is shocked and dismayed ; resistless fate enmeshes him

more and more, involving in his fall all who have served or approached him. The drama is at an end—Death remains sole master of the field.

The play is constructed as follows:—"The Camp" is a prelude written in humorous rhyme, showing the laxity of discipline and mutinous sentiments of the soldiery.

"The Camp" is Wallenstein; its occupants are actuated entirely by his will— influenced only by his wishes. While such is the case, he is invincible; but already dissension's seed is sown—the alternative put: Ferdinand, or Wallenstein? Open collision is not yet possible, the Emperor is unable to cope with the General, but he has a secret ally in that general's most valued friend, the elder Piccolomini.

The military spirit breathed in the first part is likewise predominant in the second. In the "Piccolomini," the officers are a refined reflex of their men in "The Camp." The seed is ripening; the harvest approaches. As long as Wallenstein was but an imperial general, all was union; but the moment his selfish schemes are developed, a struggle is inevitable—it is only delayed until he declares himself a traitor. The English Colonel Butler is added to the list of his enemies, and appoints himself executioner.

It is in the third section, "Wallenstein's Death," that the fatal step is taken, with all its destructive consequences. Friends disappear, soldiers mutiny, and the assassin's hand dispels the vision of empire. Wife, sister, and daughter are involved in his fall.

With especial interest we follow the steps of Wallenstein,

"the poetical Hamlet," as Carlyle designates him. His maxims and precepts of philosophy have been rendered so beautifully by Schiller, as to become almost oracular. The annexed extracts will afford ample illustration:—

Ernst ist der Anblick der Nothwendigkeit.  
Nicht ohne Schaudern greift des Menschen Hand  
In des Geschicks geheimnißvolle Urne.

• • • • •  
Nicht hoffe, wer des Drachens Zähne sät,  
Erfreuliches zu ernten. Jede Unthat  
Trägt ihren eignen Racheengel schon,  
Die böse Hoffnung, unter ihrem Herzen.

• • • • •  
Es giebt keinem Zufall,  
Und was uns blindes Ohygefähr nur dünnkt,  
Gerade das steigt aus den tiefsten Duellen.\*

Another of Schiller's finest delineations is that of the Countess Terzky—the proud, intriguing woman, who saw through Wallenstein's plans, and gave him so good an insight into his own designs as often to urge him on to action.

The episode of Max and Thekla, although not forming an essential part of the drama, will always be productive

\* Stern is the onlook of Necessity;  
Not without shuddering does a human hand  
Grasp the mysterious urn of destiny.

• • • • •  
Who sows the dragon's teeth, let him not hope  
To reap a joyous harvest. Every crime  
Has in its train its own avenging angel;  
A dark misgiving gnaws the inmost heart.

• • • • •  
There's no such thing as chance,  
And what to us seems merely accident,  
Springs from the deepest source of destiny.

of the warmest emotion. Schiller has been much censured for allowing Thekla to disappear from the scene without any clue being given to her fate. In one of his minor poems he makes his heroine's spirit return the following answer to this objection:—

Hab' ich nicht beschlossen und feendet, ||v  
Hab' ich nicht gehebet und gelebt? \* ||u

How charming is her monologue on her way to Max's grave. How melancholy to hear her say,

Zur tiefen Ruh, wie er sie auch gefunden.  
Es zieht mich fort, ich weiß nicht, wie ich's nenne.  
Unwiederstehlich fort zu seinem Grabe!  
Dort wird mir leichter werden, augenblicklich!  
Das herzerstickende Band des Schmerzens wird  
Sich lösen—meine Thränen werden fließen.  
Nicht Ruhe find' ich, bis ich diesen Mauern  
Entronnen bin—sie stürzen auf mich ein—  
Fortstoßend treibt mich eine dunkle Macht  
Von dannen. Was ist das für ein Gefühl!  
Es füllen sich mir alle Räume dieses Hauses  
Mit bleichen, hohlen Geisterbildern an—  
Ich habe keinem Platz mehr—Immer neue!  
Es drängt mich das entsetzliche Gewimmel  
Aus diesen Wänden fort, die Lebende!

• • • • •  
Sein Geist ist's, der mich ruft. Es ist die Schaar  
Der Treuen, die sich rächend ihm geopfert.  
Unedler Säumniss klagen sie mich an.  
Sie wollten auch im Tod nicht von ihm lassen  
Der ihres Lebens Führer war—das thaten  
Die rohen Herzen, und ich sollte leben?  
—Nein! Auch für mich ward jener Lorbeerkrantz

\* Is not my destiny fulfilled,  
Have I not lived and loved? What more?

Der deine Todtenbahre schmückt gewunden,  
 Was ist das Leben ohne Liebesglanz?  
 Ich werf' es hin, da sein Gehalt verschwunden.  
 . . . . .  
 Da kommt das Schicksal — Roh und kalt  
 Faßt es des Freundes jährliche Gestalt  
 Und wirft ihn unter den Hufschlag seiner Pferde —  
 Das ist das Los des Schönen auf der Erde! \*

## SETTLEMENT AT WEIMAR.

It must be noticed that Schiller's later tragedies are by far the best adapted for the stage. This resulted from

- \* To that deep slumber, such as he has found,  
 It draws me on — I know not what to name it —  
 Resistless does it draw me to his grave!  
 There will my heart at once some solace feel!  
 The heart-oppressing fetters of my sadness  
 Will be loosed — my tears will flow.  
 There is no rest for me till I have fled  
 These walls — they fall upon me —  
 Some dim power drives me hence.  
 Ha! — What feeling's this!  
 Every space within this house  
 Is filled with pale gaunt shapes!  
 Here is no room for me! — still more! —  
 And more! the hideous spectres swarm,  
 And chase me from th' accursed house.  
 . . . . .  
 His spirit 't is that calls me; 't is the troop  
 Of faithful souls that sacrificed themselves  
 In vengeance for his fall. And *they*  
 Would not forsake their leader, e'en in death.  
 Thus acted they: and can *I* live?  
 No! for me too that laurel garland,  
 Which decked his bier, was twined;  
 What is this life without his love?  
 I cast it from me, 't is a worthless casket.  
 . . . . .  
 The King of Terror comes, and grasp'd  
 And clutch'd with iron hold my friend,  
 And hurl'd him 'neath the hoofs of trampling steeds;  
 Such is the lot of heroes in this world.

his active supervision of the theatre at Weimar, in which town he now permanently resided, having moved thither chiefly on account of his health. He, however, frequently visited Jena for lengthened periods, it being now the residence of Göthe. All fear of poverty was removed by the bountiful patronage of the Duke of Weimar, who created him a noble, and guaranteed to him an income in case of sickness. This noble generosity caused him to decline many lucrative offers, which were made him from other quarters. Comfort in pecuniary matters was his aim, not wealth. He was much gratified by the favours he received from the Duchess, the celebrated Amalia, a lady who well knew how to appreciate talent, and availed herself of every opportunity to render assistance to genius.

In 1800 appeared

### **Maria Stuart,**

so deservedly interesting to British readers.

Schiller, tired of soldiers and sovereigns as heroes of his dramas, longed again to represent those human emotions and sufferings, in picturing which his own feelings had such ample scope; and suitable, indeed, for his purpose was the heart-saddening story of the beautiful, but unfortunate Scottish queen. Although *Maria Stuart* is essentially a historical tragedy, the sentiment, sympathy, and pathos so preponderate, as to throw fact entirely into the shade; and it is at once seen that the *dramatis personæ* are merely the representatives of those ideas already treated of in “*Wallenstein*.”

Although the drama is a complete travestie of history,

still Schiller well contrasts the young, enchanting, dangerous, but comparatively innocent Scot, with the masculine, wise, patriotic, but jealous and vindictive maiden Queen. The plot is too complicated for insertion here, suffice it to say that Leicester is made to court both queens at once, and finding his chances of becoming Prince Consort of England diminish, he resolves to be King of Scotland. To aid Mary's escape from Fotheringay, he persuades Elizabeth privately to visit her cousin, hoping thereby to awaken pity, and thus secure pardon. The crisis is given with much skill and energy, and we cannot but anticipate something dreadful as the result of the royal interview; the one queen proud, haughty, and contemptuous — her injured cousin no less proud, no less haughty, no less contemptuous, and her forced humility and submissiveness speedily giving way, until she is at last foaming with passion. The die is cast! Mary's fall is resolved upon — England's wounded pride can only be avenged by death, and the Secretary is cruelly made by Elizabeth the instrument of her revenge. We cannot but pity her when she exclaims, in her captivity —

Eilende Wölfe!  
Segler der Lüfte!  
Wer mit euch wanderte,  
Wer mit euch schifte!  
Grüßet mir freundlich mein Jugendland! \*

\* ACT III. SCENE I.

Ye fleeting clouds, that fly  
So swiftly through the air,  
Oh! could I sail with you!  
Pray greet, and greet tenderly,  
The dear land of my youth.

The last hour has arrived, and a poetical requiem reconciles the heated passions and deadly hatred so conspicuous throughout the tragedy. In the last scene, there is an unequalled picture of a loving heart quitting all that was most dear to it here on earth :—

Was klagt ihr? Warum weint ihr? Freuen solltet  
Ihr euch mit mir, daß meiner Leiden Ziel  
Nun endlich naht, daß meine Bande fallen,  
Mein Kerker aufgeht, und die frohe Seele sich  
Auf Engelsflügeln schwingt zur ew'gen Freiheit.  
Da, als ich in die Macht der stolzen Feindin  
Gegeben war, Unwürdiges erduldbend,  
Was einer freien, großen Königin nicht ziemt,  
Da war es Zeit um mich zu weinen!  
— Wohlthätig, heilend nahet mir der Tod,  
Der ernste Freund! Mit seinen schwarzen Flügeln  
Bedeckt er meine Schmach.  
— Melvil, die letzten Wünsche für die Meinen  
Leg' ich in eure treue Brust—  
Sie werden die Geschenke meiner Liebe,  
Wie arm sie sind, darum gering nicht achten.  
Was ich die Arme, die Beraubte noch besaß  
Worüber mir vergönnt ist, frei zu schalten,  
Das hab ich unter euch vertheilt.  
Auch was ich auf dem Todeswege trage,  
Gehöret euch—Bergönnet mir noch einmal  
Der Erde Glanz auf meinem Weg zum Himmel!  
Kommt alle! kommt und empfängt mein letztes Lebewohl  
Ich bin viel gehasset worden, doch auch viel geliebt!  
Lebt wohl! Lebt wohl! Lebt ewig wohl!\*

## \* ACT V. SCENE XVI.

Why these repinings? Why weep ye? Rather  
With me rejoice that my woe's end  
At last approaches, that my shackles fall,  
My prison opens, and my soul delighted  
Rises on seraph's wings to everlasting liberty.

With regard to the idea working in the drama, I need only remark that the two Queens represent respectively Protestantism and Romanism, opposed to each other in a severe struggle, which is followed by a tragic ending.

This is by no means one of the most successful efforts of his pen. The burlesque of history approaches the absurd; the theme is hackneyed, the effect small. The conception of Elizabeth's character is very inaccurate, and the meeting of the two Queens at Fotheringay, however effective and speedily, must be pronounced undignified. These faults were amply redeemed by the appearance of

### **The Maid of Orleans,**

which was produced in the succeeding year (1801), and which is founded upon a patriotic struggle for freedom from foreign oppression. The English yoke, weighing at

When sore oppressed by my proud enemy,  
And suffering taunts ignoble and unfitting  
A free and sov'reign Queen; that was the time  
To weep for me. An earnest friend—  
Beneficent and healing Death—approaches;  
With sable wings he'll cover all my shame;  
Melvil, to your loyal bosom I commit  
My latest wishes—wishes for those I love.  
They'll not despise the presents of my heart,  
However mean. What I, though poor and plundered,  
Still possess, and may make free disposal of,  
Let it be shared amongst you. What I wear  
Upon the way to death is likewise yours.  
O envy not, but let me wear once more  
The pomp of earth upon my path to heav'n.  
Come all, and now receive my last farewell;  
I have been hated much, yet much beloved,  
Farewell! Farewell! dear friends for ever.

this time upon the mass of the French people, prevented the development of those aspirations for civil and moral freedom which had been excited in the reign of St. Louis. The celebrated St. Marc Girardin states, that "only the advent of Joan of Arc had saved France; that from that period the French first became a nation and a state; that the most remarkable epoch in the history of his country is connected with her appearance, for it was she who fought out the national struggle, and suffered death for the sake of her country's liberties."

At the period of the rise of the maiden of Orleans, France was devastated and distracted by national war, civil dissension, a conspiracy amongst the nobles, discouraged citizens, a king without a residence — or perhaps more properly no king at all — and a hostile army led by Talbot and the queen mother, Isabel. The Dauphin is more adapted to the shepherd life of old King René than for the stirring times in which he lived, and applies the prophecy of a nun of Clermont, that he shall be saved by a woman, to his favourite Agnes Sorel. The true deliverer arises in a far more humble state of life. Aided by divine inspiration, a beautiful shepherdess leaves her native fields, saying —

Lebt wohl ihr Berge, ihr geliebten Triften,  
Ich traurlich stillen Thäler, lebet wohl!  
Johanna wird nun nicht mehr auf euch wandeln,  
Johanna sagt euch ewig Lebewohl!  
Ihr Wiesen, die ich wässerte, ihr Bäume  
Die ich gepflanzt, grünnet fröhlich fort!  
Lebt wohl ihr Grotten und ihr kühlen Brunnen!  
Du Echo, holde Stimme dieses Thals,

Die oft mir Antwort gab auf meine Lieder,  
Johanna geht, und nimmer kehrt sie wieder!

Ihr Plätze aller meiner stillen Freuden,  
Euch las ich hinter mir auf immerdar!  
Zerstreuet euch ihr Lämmer auf der Heiden,  
Ihr seid jetzt eine hirtenlose Schaar.  
Denn eine andre Heerde muß ich weiden,  
Dort auf dem blut'gen Felde der Gefahr.  
So ist des Geistes Ruf an mich ergangen,  
Mich treibt nicht eitles, irdisches Verlangen.

Ein Zeichen hat der Himmel mir verheißen,  
Er sendet mir den Helm, der kommt von ihm,  
Mit Götterkraft berühret mich sein Eisen,  
Und mich durchflammt der Ruth der Cherubim,  
Ins Kriegsgewühl hinein will es mich reißen,  
Es treibt mich fort mit Sturmes Ungetüm,  
Den Feldruf hör' ich mächtig zu mir dringen,  
Das Schlachtroß steigt, und die Trompeten klingen.\*

\* ACT I. SCENE IV.

Farewell, ye mountains, ye beloved glades,  
Ye dear and lonely valleys, fare ye well!  
In you Johanna ne'er will wander more,  
Johanna bids a long, a last farewell.  
Ye pastures which I watered, and ye trees  
By my hands planted, still in beauty bloom ;  
Adieu, ye grottoes, adieu, refreshing springs.  
Sweet Echo, vocal spirit of this vale,  
Who often gavest answer to my strain,  
Johanna goes, nor comes she e'er again.

The scenes of all my tranquil joys  
Behind me now I leave for aye.  
You lambs, of shepherd's care bereft,  
Henceforth on heath at will may stray ;  
In future I another flock must tend,  
There in the crimson fields of war ;  
Thither I'm summoned by the spirits dread,  
By no vain love of glory am I led.

She annihilates the English hopes, reconciles France and Burgundy, reinstates a French nationality, a French king, and a French church, and is publicly blessed by an archbishop in her country's name. Whilst the servant of God, she was to forsake even father and mother, and follow the Virgin only; and while untouched by human love, she was irresistible; but the image of Lionel once implanted in her bosom, her power was at an end. How dare she consider herself any longer the instrument of heaven, when her heart is chained to Lionel?—how dare shun earthly ties, while attached to one of those oppressors to expel whom was her mission? At this point of her history, earthly nature and worldly passion oppose her career. When accused of witchcraft by her unbelieving father, who desires her to "tell him, in the name of the Holy Trinity, whether she is inspired," she, feeling her stain, can only remain silent; but a voice from heaven apparently pronounces her guilt, and sentence is passed. But a few short minutes ago she was all powerful, now she is an outcast. The gallant Dunois at last forsakes her, and Raymond alone remains faithful—Raymond, her shepherd lover, who could never look upon her as otherwise than spiritual. The poor girl at last subdues her love, only to fall a prisoner in the hands of the

A heavenly sign by heaven was promised;  
To me this helmet, thence descending,  
Inspires me with strength divine,  
The valour of an angel lending.  
To war's rough tumult it resistless drives,  
As with the rushing of a mighty wind;  
The war-cry in my ear resounds,  
The eager charger to the contest bounds.

queen mother. Swayed entirely by sentiment, she is, as might be expected, offered up a victim at the shrine of genius. Earthly joys are not for one whose soul penetrates at once both life and death. Heaven must be her resting-place. Her miraculous power is at once restored, and, uninfluenced by the fear of Isabel's dagger, she bursts her fetters, and escaping from the enemy's power, rushes once more into the battle, saves her king, and dies. Her work is done; her mortal body alone remains below; the eternal victory is won; her spirit is united to the heavenly throng, whose mission she had so well fulfilled. She appears throughout the drama as one thus delegated to be her country's saviour, and at her side, kings and queens, priests and warriors, sink into utter insignificance. The soft but generous Agnes Sorel throws into still higher relief the noble Joan. Her admirer, Dunois, and opponent, Talbot, are fine delineations of veterans.

The poet has well atoned for having here sacrificed historical truth to dramatic effect. The "Maid of Orleans," excelling in diction and intrinsic merit, has produced a host of enthusiastic admirers. At the conclusion of its first representation, at Leipzig, the cry of "Long live Friedrich Schiller" resounded from all sides of the house, accompanied by martial music; and, upon his showing himself outside the theatre, he was surrounded by the entire audience, who, bare-headed, formed an avenue, through which he had to pass to his residence. His nature, however, was far too unassuming and retiring to allow him to feel gratified at such noisy applause.

Two years later, we find him trespassing upon the realms of classic antiquity—indeed, in

### **The Bride of Messina,**

the reader almost seems to be seated before an Athenian stage, witnessing the newest drama by Sophocles or Euripides. To aid him in this task he has first availed himself of the Greek chorus; an admiring throng which was in the habit of attending the footsteps of gods, kings, and heroes; whose words and actions were, in those early times, very generally canvassed. This chorus warmly espouses the cause of him to whom it is attached—freely censuring and lauding; it is a sort of divine substitute, marking the bounds not to be overstepped by human will, and foretelling the punishment in store for transgressors. We likewise recognise the antique element in that 'Destiny' which mysteriously directs the characters in "The Bride of Messina."

A curse rests on the princely race of Messina—a curse, the result of a former prince having carried off his father's betrothed. All is therefore tragic; a magician and a priest have exercised their prophetic power; a sad fate rests on all the descendants of the doomed house, and consequently on the family here alluded to. The princess hides her daughter in a lonely convent, in order to withdraw her from the fear and hatred of the prince, her husband, who dreads the fulfilment of the augury that his house would fall through a daughter's influence. Her two sons

live in fierce enmity. The mutual hatred of these two brothers had been forcibly restrained during their father's lifetime; but, the prince once dead, it breaks forth with unchecked fury. Why this hatred? It is remorseless fate—a cruel destiny—a fearful secret. Beatrice grows in beauty and innocence, quite ignorant of her royal parentage. Manuel, while out hunting, becomes enamoured of the fair girl; and his brother Cæsar, seeing her at her father's funeral, and equally unaware with Manuel of their consanguinity, conceives the same unhappy passion. Both are so engrossed in their love, that their hatred is subdued, and they become reconciled. I should mention that a second augury predicted to the mother the reconciliation of the brothers Manuel and Cæsar, through the means of their concealed and unknown sister Beatrice. The happy mother is now only anxious that her daughter shall be reinstated in her rights, and therefore reveals to her now united sons the secret that they have a sister, and learns, in return, of the attachment they have formed.

Manuel has already carried off his betrothed from her place of concealment, and prepares to go in quest of her, when a messenger brings the intelligence of the sister's disappearance. Startled by the coincidence, he rushes forth to remove his agonising suspicions. He little knows that Cæsar has, meanwhile, declared to the affrighted girl his intention to make her his bride. The brothers meet in her presence, and Cæsar, carried away by his jealous fury and disappointed love, stabs his rival; and, dismayed at his heinous crime, puts an end to his

weary existence. All is over—both predictions are verified. The mother's love is here a curse to the object of it; by her guilty want of confidence, she causes the downfall of her house. The brothers are equally to blame, in keeping their affection secret from each other, and, until too late, in one instance from the object of it; both equally bear the penalty—their affection is equally unfortunate. As is often the case, family mysteries lead to family misfortunes.

"The Bride of Messina" excels all Schiller's dramas in splendour and beauty of diction, and is, in that respect, one of the finest specimens of modern German Literature. The following quotation, where the chorus warns the princess not to be premature in her joy at her sons' reconciliation, will sufficiently illustrate this:—

*Erster Chor (Cajetan).*

Durch die Straßen der Städte,  
Vom Jammer gefolget,  
Schreitet das Unglück—  
Laurend umschleicht es  
Die Häuser der Menschen;  
Heute an dieser  
Pforte pocht es,  
Morgen an jener,  
Aber noch keinen hat es verschont.  
Die unerwünschte,  
Schmerzliche Botschaft,  
Früher oder später  
Bestellt es an jeder  
Schwelle, wo ein Lebendiger wohnt.

*(Berengar.)*

Wenn die Blätter fallen  
In des Jahres Kreise,

Wenn zum Grabe wallen  
 Entnervte Greise,  
 Da gehorcht die Natur  
 Ruhig nur  
 Ihrem alten Gesetze,  
 Ihrem ewigen Brauch;  
 Da ist nichts, was den Menschen entseze.

Aber das Ungeheure auch  
 Lerne erwarten im irdischen Leben!  
 Mit gewaltsamer Hand  
 Raffet der Tod  
 Auch der Jugend blühendes Leben.

Darum in deinen fröhlichen Tagen  
 Fürchte des Unglücks tüchtige Nähe!  
 Nicht an die Güter hänge dein Herz,  
 Die das Leben vergänglich zieren;  
 Wer im Glück ist, der lerne den Schmerz! \*

\* (CAJETAN.)

Misfortune glides  
 From street to street,  
 With footstep sure and slow;  
 For in this life  
 We all must meet  
 This stealthy minister of woe.  
 Sorrow bearing,  
 No man sparing;  
 In turn he, dreaded, stands at every gate;  
 All must some day hear the dreaded knock of FATE.

(BERENGAR.)

When autumn marks  
 The year's decease,  
 And mournful forest leaf decays,  
 When man in death  
 Obtains release  
 From care and weight of days;  
 Nature, content, obeys her endless law;  
 The certain doom excites no shuddering awe.

He defended this experiment (for so I must call it) with great ability, but it proved, notwithstanding, a comparative failure. The poetry is magnificent, but does not atone for clothing a modern subject and modern sentiments in ancient forms. We are neither moved nor interested. Racine is equally unfortunate in this respect. Not so Göthe, who, in his *Iphigenia auf Tauris*, is fettered by no blind adherence to ancient forms, even discarding the chorus altogether.

The choice of 'Destiny,' as the ruling power in the Tragedy, has called forth many just censures; but perhaps we ought rather to blame Kant and Hegel, whose works he was at this period of his life intently studying, and whose philosophy produced a fierce but evanescent storm in Schiller's breast; a storm which only had the effect of freeing his mind from the obscurities which might have darkened that benignant and irrepressible sun of his genius, "William Tell," before reviewing which I must say a few words on his

### **Maturer Poems,**

1790—1805.

In these we find a constant struggle after improve-

While days both calm  
And happy last,  
Always expect a storm,  
Malicious Fate  
Approaches fast,  
Ills, dread and endless, dawn;  
Fix not your heart on earthly joys, for they,  
Like man and flower, bloom only to decay.

ment. Their talented translator, Bulwer, remarks that in them there is “a great and forcible intellect, ever appealing to the best feelings—ever exalting those whom it addresses—ever intent upon strengthening man in his struggles with his destiny, and uniting with golden chain the outer world and the inner to the Celestial Throne. Schiller’s poetry is less in form than in substance—less in subtle elegance of words than in robust healthfulness of thought, which, like man himself, will bear transplanting to every clime. The vocation of his Muse is a Religious Mission. She loses not her spiritual prerogative, though shorn of her stately pageantry, and despoiled of her festive robes. Her power to convert and to enlighten, to purify and to raise, depends not on the splendour of her appearance, but on the truths that she proclaims.”

In his early poems, there was but one rude ballad; we now find several, conspicuous amongst which are *The Diver*, *The Knight of Toggenburg*, *The Cranes of Ibycus*, and *The Fight with the Dragon*. They are too long for quotation here, but will well repay perusal, being among the most truly poetical and touching productions of the kind extant in any language. We must remark, however, that in striving after the sublime, Schiller failed in acquiring that simple narrative style which renders the genuine old ballad so attractive. He, however, arouses the feelings in no common degree, by conveying the reader, when in the midst of familiar objects, to sublime reflections on the loftiest themes. Thus, in “The Dance”—

Und dir rauschen umsonst die Harmonien des Weltalls ;  
Dich engreift nicht der Strom dieses erhabnen Gesangs ;  
Nicht der begeisternde Tact, den alle Wesen dir schlagen ;  
Nicht der wirbelnde Tanz, der durch den ewigen Raum  
Leuchtende Sonnen schwingt in kühn gewundenen Bahnen ;  
Das du im Spiele doch ehrst, siehst du im Handeln, das Maß.\*

The little epigram on "The Child in the Cradle" is very well worth insertion :—

Glücklicher Säugling ! dir ist ein unendlicher Raum noch die Wiege,  
Werde Mann und dir wird eng die unendliche Welt.+

The poem best known to English readers is the "Lay of the Bell"—the gem of his *Culture-Historic* pieces—which contains an exquisite delineation of the *individual* life of man, from his birth to his death. Not having space to insert the whole, I must content myself with giving two extracts, which are unconnected with the general design. The following is introduced where the flames burst forth at the first opening of the casting furnace, and depicts a scene only too common in Germany at that period :—

Hört ihr 's wimmern hoch vom Thurm ?  
Das ist Sturm !  
Roth, wie Blut,  
Ist der Himmel ;

\* Thus translated by Bulwer—

And comes the WORLD's wide harmony in vain upon thine ears—  
The stream of music borne aloft from yonder choral spheres ?  
Perceiv'st thou not the measure which Eternal Nature keeps—  
The whirling dance for ever held in yonder azure deeps ?  
The suns that wheel in varying maze ? *That* measure thou discernest ?  
No ! thou canst honour that in sport which thou forget'st in earnest.

+ Blest babe ! thy narrow bed a wide world seems to thee ;  
Become a man, and narrower still the wide wide world shall be.

Das ist nicht des Tages Glut!  
Welch Getümmel,  
Straßen auf!  
Dampf wallt auf!  
Flackernd steigt die Feuersäule,  
Durch der Straße lange Zeile  
Wächst es fort mit Windeseile;  
Kochend, wie aus Osens Rachen,  
Glühn die Lüfte, Balken krachen,  
Pfosten stürzen, Fenster klirren,  
Kinder jammern, Mütter irren,  
Thiere wimmern  
Unter Trümmern;  
Alles rennet, rettet, flüchtet,  
Taghell ist die Nacht gelichtet;  
Durch der Hände lange Kette  
Um die Wette  
Fliegt der Eimer; hoch im Bogen  
Sprühen Quellen Wasserwogen.  
Heulend kommt der Sturm geslogen,  
Der die Flamme brausend sucht.  
Prasselnd in die dürre Frucht  
Fällt sie, in des Speichers Räume,  
In der Sparren dürre Bäume,  
Und als wollte sie im Wehen  
Mit sich fort der Erde Wucht  
Reißen in gewalt' ger Flucht,  
Wächst sie in des Himmels Höhen  
Riesengroß!  
Hoffnungslos  
Weicht der Mensch der Götterstärke,  
Müßig sieht er seine Werke  
Und bewundernd untergehen.  
Leergebrannt  
Ist die Stätte,  
Wilder Stürme rauhes Bett.  
In den öden Fensterhöhlen

Wohnt das Granen,  
Und des Himmels Wolken schauen  
Hoch hinein.

Einen Blick  
Nach dem Grabe  
Seiner Habe  
Sendet noch der Mensch zurück—  
Greift fröhlich dann zum Wanderstabe  
Was Feuers Wuth ihm auch geraubt,  
Ein süßer Trost ist ihm geblieben:  
Er zählt die Häupter seiner Lieben,  
Und sieh! ihm fehlt kein theures Haupt.\*

\* I have translated these passages rather freely, because I felt that it would be impracticable to attempt to convey to the reader any of those beauties in the original which depend mainly upon the *form* of the verse. Many translations of this excellent poem have been made, but, as only one had found its way into my possession at the time of going to press, (and that unsuited to my purpose,) I had no alternative but to render it into English myself. Schiller's wonderful mastery over his native language is nowhere more powerfully displayed than in "Das Lied von der Glocke."

Hark—with a groan from yonder steeple,  
The BELL now slowly warns the people!  
Look! look! red as blood,  
Everywhere the sky:  
'T is not now the flood  
Of daylight darts on high.  
From street to street the clamour roars:  
Aloft the ruddy column soars:  
Through arcades and rows it pours;  
With whirlwind speed it goes;  
And like a steaming furnace glows.  
Here lighted rafters flash;  
There falls a beam!  
Now heated windows crash;  
Now children scream!  
A poor distracted mother rushes frantically around;  
The howling beast lies crushed upon the wreck-strewn ground.  
Helter-skelter, all take flight;  
Clear as day is now the night;

The next extract furnishes an admirable picture of the French Revolution—

Web, wenn sich in dem Schoß der Städte  
Der Feuerzunder still gehäuft,  
Das Volk, zerreißend seine Kette,  
Zur Eigenhülfe schrecklich greift!  
Da zerret an der Glocke Strängen  
Der Aufruhr, daß sie heulend schallt  
Und, nur geweint zu Friedensklängen,  
Die Lösung anstimmt zur Gewalt.

Swiftly pass the buckets by,  
Along the human chain they fly.  
The streams, from engines pouring,  
Are hissing, sparkling, roaring,  
And in lofty arches soaring,  
Chasing flames that upward shoot,  
To the treasured hoards of fruit,  
And the granaries' valued store.  
The fire spreads more and more,  
Through spars and beams  
It so savagely streams,  
It might intend  
Earth herself to rend.  
And now, with giant height,  
To heaven it wings its flight.

Despairing!  
Wearied man sits watching it with gloom ;  
Not caring  
T' arrest the scourge. He knows it is his Doom !  
Desolate is now the place,  
Fitting spot where storms may play ;  
In the casement's vacant space,  
Sit dark clouds and blank dismay.

Towards the ruin of his all he took  
But one long farewell look,  
Then turn'd he bravely to depart.  
He is not yet of *all* bereft,  
*One* sweet treasure still is left,  
*Those dear ones* nearest to his heart.

Freiheit und Gleichheit! hört man schallen;  
Der ruh'ge Bürger greift zur Wehr.  
Die Straßen füllen sich, die Hallen,  
Und Bürgerbanden ziehn umher.  
Da werden Weiber zu Hyänen  
Und treiben mit Entsetzen Scherz;  
Noch zuckend, mit des Panthers Zähnen,  
Zerreissen sie des Feindes Herz.  
Nichts Heiliges ist me'r, es lösen  
Sich alle Bande frommer Scheu;  
Der Gute räumt den Platz dem Bösen,  
Und alle Laster walten frei.  
Gefährlich ist 's, den Leu zu wecken,  
Verderblich ist des Tigers Zahn;  
Jedoch der schrecklichste der Schrecken,  
Das ist der Mensch in seinem Wah'n.  
Weh denen, die dem Ewigblinden  
Des Lichtes Himmelsfackel leih'n!  
Sie strahlt ihm nicht, sie kann nur zünden  
Und äschert Städ't und Länder ein.\*

\* Woe ! when the embers, which were hid  
In city's heart, now burst to flame ;  
When hosts to Rule defiance bid,  
And Fury as their chief proclaim.  
Now the warning Bell howls sadly,  
Shouting " Discord " far and near ;  
The messenger of Peace tolls madly  
Signals of Revolt and Fear.

" Freedom ! " " Equality "—Man roars ;  
The citizens for strife prepare ;  
Through street and hall the torrent pours ;  
Murd'rous hordes are everywhere.  
With mirth Hyenas—(Women !)—dare  
Dreadful horrors to survey,  
While with Panther-fangs they tear  
Hearts from out their human prey.  
Nought held sacred now is seen,  
Nor aught of pious dread ;

We now come to

### **William Tell,**

the next and last of his completed dramas.

Göthe called his attention to the materials for this drama. He set to work on the 9th of August, 1803, and, notwithstanding his delicate state of health, it was ready for the stage on the 18th of February, 1804.

The idea of 'liberty' passes through most of Schiller's tragedies. In "The Robbers," we find abstract liberty of the individual rebelling against the world — the issue, death and ruin. In "Fiesco," the individual is opposed to a single government — the result, rapine and murder. In "Plot and Passion," rank opposes rank within the State — contact causes a still wider separation. "Don Carlos" cannot but be the field of substantial interest — the victory of declining Romanism over the slumbering Reformation resembles a defeat. In "Maria Stuart," the downfall of church despotism is completed — but Protestantism is yet cold, heartless, and abstract. The "Maid of Orleans" secures liberty from a foreign yoke — domestic oppression is still un-

Vice conqu'ror all around has been,  
And Virtue captive led.  
To rouse the Lion from his bed,  
Or face the glaring Tiger's teeth,  
Is hazardous; but far more dread  
Is Man, when Error's sway beneath.  
That eternal blindness pity,  
Which no ray can e'er illume;  
Heaven's torch, both Land and City,  
Lightens now but to consume.

checked. It only remains to find liberty pervading all ranks of life, all forms of religion, guiding every action and colouring every sentiment of a people. "William Tell" realises this liberty, gradually developed throughout his dramas. We are arrived at that stage where the *real* is united to the *ideal*, where the sublime is the form of man's perfection. Schiller's work is completed; his career is ended; he had but a glimpse at the new century, the motto of which he indited, and in which were to be realised his bright prophecies. He lived in the future, in a world of new ideas; he sleeps with Æschylus, Dante, and Shakspeare.

A noble, free, and independent people, worthy of and hitherto enjoying liberty, is suddenly oppressed; its laws and institutions violated; its peculiar usages despised and checked. The governor, Gessler, abuses the imperial authority, tyrannises over those he was sent to protect, and provokes the hardy Swiss to rebellion and revenge. By violating the ties of kindred, he destroyed the very chords of life; by interfering with the national customs, he trampled upon the spirit of the people. Their patriotism once insulted, every subject of the fatherland considers the aim of life destroyed; existence has become valueless. The brave Switzers make no vain outcry, they prepare themselves in all secrecy, by a union of boroughs and families, for opening a struggle for liberty; and, when distress has reached its climax, Tell, in revenging the wrongs he himself had suffered, revenges those of his family and people, by freeing them from Gessler's tyranny. The crisis has arrived; the Swiss to

a man rise in rebellion. Times are changed, ancient laws demolished, but a new life dawns on their ruins. Wilhelm Tell is the only one of Schiller's heroes who survives the struggle for freedom; and how could it be otherwise? he alone expiates his guilt, by regaining for Switzerland her fallen liberties. He lives, and lives in freedom; but not without a fearful contest.

The drama is constructed as follows. In the *first Act* we have a masterly exposition of the people's feelings of indignation, caused by constant injury and oppression. Baumgarten slays with his axe Wolfenshiessen, who has insulted his wife; in his flight, Tell, by rowing him over to Schwyz, during a fearful storm, saves his life. Werner Stauffacher is inflamed by his wife Gertrude with a desire for liberty, a feeling rendered doubly powerful by Gessler's edict, commanding the people to show deference to a hat raised on a pole. Melchthal slays one of Gessler's servants, and is concealed by Walter Fürst. The news that the tyrant has afterwards blinded Melchthal's father rouses all to action.

In the *second Act* the noble Attinghausen espouses the cause of the oppressed. He represents that liberal-minded portion of the aristocracy whose feelings are in unison with those of an intelligent people, possessing substantial strength and power. His nephew Rudenz thinks, or pretends to think, far otherwise, for, having imbibed quixotic ideas of chivalry, and loving Gessler's ward, he is entirely alienated from sympathy with his oppressed fatherland, and espouses the cause of the governor. Attinghausen in vain reminds his nephew of

his social duties. The representatives of the people assemble on the Rütli, and resolve to risk all in defence of their just rights. Moderation, however, is never sacrificed to passion ; the *real* is already foreshadowed in the *ideal*.

In the *third Act* Rudenz is converted by the heroine Bertha. The dispute reaches its height. Tell is cruelly ordered to shoot an apple from his son's head. The successful shot is typical of a second which is to follow. Rudenz shows himself worthy of his fair converter, and boldly accuses Gessler of illegal practices. Tell is conveyed away a prisoner.

In the *fourth Act* Attinghausen, expiring, foretells the coming liberty, and his prediction is soon verified by Tell, who, having escaped, and feeling that his own and his children's lives will be forfeited, shoots the tyrant in self defence.

The *concluding Act* treats on the demolition of the fortresses, and the consequent liberation of Bertha, who had been concealed in one of them, and is united to Rudluz—a free Swiss maiden to a free Swiss man. A striking contrast is drawn between Tell and the Duke of Austria, who had assassinated the Emperor, his uncle, and thinks to find a refuge with the Swiss patriot, whose deep horror and disgust at the regicide are very powerfully drawn. Tell's violent deed is justified by the result : slaves become free, and a bright sun of liberty dawns over Switzerland.

In passing now from the materials to the elaborate execution and truthful thoughts therefrom produced, allow me to dwell for a few moments on the wonderful

description of Swiss nature. So life-like are the picturings that you almost fancy yourself a spectator of the scenery described. You will see a blue lake bordered by gilded hills — you arrive with Tell at a small island, an oasis in this icy desert of eternal snow, whose sole inhabitant is the hoarse vulture. Amidst foaming torrents and headlong cataracts the Alpen-Rose is growing at your feet; like the brave mountaineer it only finds life there, withering and bleaching in the warmth of the plains below. Your eye traces the bold chamois-hunter, looking down from his dizzy height upon the valleys below, and seeing the world only through a vista of clouds. The noblest feelings of your nature will be aroused on behalf of old Melchthal, who has been bereft of sight by Gessler's soldiers. Poor old man! all around him was night — he could no longer gaze on those glittering summits, could no more look on verdant plain or flowery meadow. You will see the fishermen skim the placid lake — the Mythenstein become enveloped in clouds — hear the winds issue from the valley, and involuntarily you exclaim with Ruoni, the fisherman —

Behe dem Fahrzeug, das, jetzt, unterwegs,  
In dieser furchtbaren Wiege wird gewiegt!  
Hier ist das Steuer unnütz und der Steurer,  
Der Sturm ist Meister, Wind und Wellen spielen  
Ball mit dem Menschen — Da ist nah und fern  
Kein Busen, der ihm freundlich Schutz gewährte!  
Handlos und schroff ansteigend starren ihm  
Die Felsen, die unwirthlichen, entgegen,  
Und weisen ihm nur ihre steinern schroffe Brust.\*

\* ACT IV. SCENE I.

Woe to the bark that now its course pursues,  
Rocked in the cradle of these storm-tost waves;

Remark further, the fine language everywhere abounding:— how effective to hear the shepherd exclaiming, as he descends the grassy mountain side —

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl!

Ihr sonnigen Weiden!

Der Senne muß scheiden,

Der Sommer ist hin.

Wir fahren zu Berg, wir kommen wieder,

Wenn der Kuckuk ruft, wenn erwachen die Lieder,

Wenn mit Blumen die Erde sich kleidet neu,

Wenn die Brünnlein fließen im lieblichen Mai.

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl!

Ihr sonnigen Weiden!

Der Senne muß scheiden,

Der Sommer ist hin.\*

Or to listen to the dream of the fisher-boy, who had fallen asleep on the borders of the lake —

Es lächelt der See, er lädet zum Bade,

Der Knabe schließt ein am grünen Gestade,

Da hört er ein Klingen,

Wie Flöten so süß,

Wie Stimmen der Engel

Im Paradies.

Useless the steersman, useless now the helm,

Here storm is master; man is but a ball

Tossed by the winds and billows. Far and near

No haven offers friendly shelter, e'en the rocks

Refuse a ledge to grasp at; inhospitably

They look on his despair, and tender

Nought but their stony, rugged breasts.

\* ACT I. SCENE I.

Farewell, sunny meadows,

The herdsman at last

Must quit your green pastures,

The Summer is past.

Und wie er erwacht in seliger Lust,  
 Da spülen die Wasser ihm um die Brust,  
 Und es ruft aus den Tiefen,  
 Lieb Knabe, bist mein!  
 Ich locke den Schläfer,  
 Ich zieh ihn herein.\*

You cannot but read with delight this charming lyric, which is so fitting a companion for those of Göthe's "Fisher" and "Sehnsucht." And when, after dwelling on these beauties, you remember that Schiller had never visited Switzerland, can you imagine that any but a great poet, a mighty genius, could have possessed so bold and daring an imagination?—We cannot, then, but conclude that "Wilhelm Tell" is Schiller's masterpiece; an edifice after the completion of which its author disappears, because he cannot conceive anything more exqui-

We're off to the mountains, but only leave take  
 Till cuckoos are calling and wood-notes awake,  
 Till you're clothed once more with flow'rets gay,  
 And streamlets sparkle in beauteous May.

Farewell, sunny meadows,  
 The herdsman at last  
 Must quit your green pastures,  
 The Summer is past.

\* ACT I. SCENE I.

The smiling lake woos to bathe in its deeps  
 A youth who on its green bank sleeps;

Then hears he a melody,  
 Flute like and sweet,  
 Like voices of Angels  
 In heaven that meet.

And when he awakes from his blissful rest,  
 The waters are murmuring over his breast;

From the deep a voice cries,  
 "Dear boy, with me go,  
 I the shepherd allure, shepherd  
 And take him below."

schäfer

site. Pindar expired by his child's side, while the music at the theatre, where his last drama was performing, was slowly dying away. Mozart could not meet his end more beautifully than during the performance of his "Requiem." Göthe quitted the world while his "Faust" was approaching completion. Schiller finished his "Wilhelm Tell" but shortly before his death. *Tell* is the boldest prediction of a dying prophet, and posterity has immortalised it on his grave:—

Ja, dein Tell, o auf Alpen,  
Ein Feiermorgen der Freiheit,  
Glüht er dir, heiligen Lichts,  
In die Unsterblichkeit nach! \*

My imperfect criticism of his works is finished. They are indeed a complete reflection of the great and noble spirit of him who has left them as a heirloom to posterity. If, in the short space to which my lecture must necessarily be restricted, I have succeeded in awakening the English reader to a fuller sense of their merits, my humble labour will be well repaid. My advice to all is, *read, and judge for yourselves*; and you cannot fail to become warm admirers of one who is worshipped not only by his own nation, but by every true lover of poetry.

#### DEATH.

Soon after the completion of his last, his most fascinating drama, Schiller was seized by a violent attack

\* Yes, thine Alpine Tell,  
Of liberty the type,  
Glow with the holy light  
Of immortality!

of his former malady, which at first threatened fatal consequences. He recovered for a time, however, and was engrossed, as usual, in numberless literary projects. His mind was turned with greater energy than ever to those subjects which were to be revealed only in the next world. His philosophy, as I have before mentioned, was essentially the reverse of scepticism. In all his works we trace a mind imbued with a firm confidence in the goodness and justice of the Creator, an intense love of his fellow-creatures, and a cheerful belief in a future eternity of bliss or woe. In 1805, in his forty-sixth year, his sickness returned, and, after a lingering illness, he felt his end approaching. On the 9th of May, he became insensible, and bordered on the verge of madness. Once again his spirit shone forth with its accustomed serenity. He took a touching but tranquil farewell of those most dear to him, and, upon some one enquiring how he felt, answered, "Calmer and calmer"—words such as might be expected from one of his unpretending heroism. Only once again he spoke; "Things grow plainer and clearer," were his last words, upon the utterance of which he sank into a tranquil sleep, from which there was no awakening here on earth. Thus he died.

One of his last requests was that his funeral should be as quiet as possible, and that his bier might be borne by private citizens. Artists and students, however, claimed the privilege, and bore him to his last home. At midnight, they approached the grave, enveloped in the gloomy obscurity of a stormy night.

Suddenly, the moon shone forth with unwonted splendour, throwing her rays on the coffin of the departed. As he was lowered into the earth, darkness again prevailed, and the tempest howled mournfully, as if heralding to mankind their great and irreparable loss. His life, like that of most children of genius, was in its outset rugged and stormy; but he has a rich compensation for all worldly cares and troubles in the endless glory of his name, immortally enshrined in the grateful remembrance of mankind.

As a preface to a general view of his

#### CHARACTER,

I must mention a few personal facts—trivial, indeed, but by no means to be omitted on that account. How precious are the slightest traits and recollections of those we love!

Schiller was tall, and very thin and wan. His complexion was pale, hair approaching auburn, nose aquiline, and chin protruding. But although he could by no means boast of the symmetry or beauty of his person, he was essentially a *gentleman*. There was an innate spirit of gentility and native aristocracy in all he thought and did. His lofty brow and softly beaming eyes were a true index of the manly, enthusiastic, yet thoughtful and tender, soul within. Once seen, his was a face which few forgot. His dress and mode of living were of the most unpretending description, and his whole bearing was characterised by dignity and unassuming modesty. As he walked, his eyes were

constantly bent upon the ground, and he consequently seldom recognised a passing acquaintance.

What chiefly distinguished him was a fine gushing enthusiasm, subdued by an intense love of his fellow creatures, and a firm faith in ideal excellence. Carlyle remarks that he was "at once fiery and tender; impetuous, soft, affectionate; his enthusiasm clothed the universe with grandeur, and sent his spirit forth to explore its secrets, and mingle warmly in its interests. Thus poetry in Schiller was not one, but many gifts. It was not the 'lean and flashy song' of an apt ear for harmony, combined with a maudlin sensibility, or a mere animal ferocity of passion, and an imagination creative chiefly because unbridled; it was, what true poetry is always, the quintessence of general mental riches, the purified result of strong thought and conception, and of refined as well as powerful emotion. In his writings we behold him a moralist, a philosopher, a man of universal knowledge; in each of these capacities he is great, but also in more; for all that he achieves in these is brightened and gilded with the touch of another quality; his maxims, his feelings, his opinions, are transformed from the lifeless shape of didactic truths, into living shapes that address faculties far finer than the understanding."

I have already observed that all his works are a reflex of himself. He was the founder of that school of poets, of which our own Byron is the immortal representative; who reveal the feelings of others in the expression of

their own—a certain road to success. He has verified his own remark :—

“ To know thyself—in others self discern;  
Wouldst thou know others? read thyself, and learn.”

He selected *Poetry* as the best form of expression for his lofty thoughts and noble ideas, for he considered it to be the enemy of all sensual joy, the leveller of all ranks, the dispeller of all conventional deceits.

As a national writer Schiller stands pre-eminent; he is the most German of German poets. No other appeals so warmly to the patriotic feelings of his countrymen; no other has done so much to arouse in them an ardent desire for the realisation of a great German nationality. He is the connecting link which converts the multitude of infinitesimal states into a mighty intellectual whole. His sentiments (like those of Burns, who was born in the same year,) are characterised by a manly independence. He appeals to no especial class or state; his are not the gentle accents fitted only for the court or drawing-room. He addresses himself at once to prince and peasant, to Hanoverian and Saxon, to Prussian and Austrian. He speaks to the *heart*, and the heart cannot fail to echo a response. In no manner has he more benefited his country, or aided the cause of union, than by his assistance in fixing the national language. He triumphed over the rude dialect which was prevalent at the commencement of his career, in a manner at once masterly and skilful. He beautified his materials without, like Chaucer, attempting impracticable innovations;

indeed, Schiller, Lessing, and Göthe must be pronounced the creators of German literature.

My object throughout has been to point to his virtues rather than to his failings, to the beauties of his writings rather than to their defects. I have given as few as possible of the mere facts connected with the Poet's life, endeavouring to the best of my ability to reflect the *man* in his works. I was the more prompted to attempt this, because Schiller never obtained the complete mastery over his materials acquired by Shakespeare. No insight into the life of the latter can be obtained from his writings, because none of his characters are personifications of himself. To those who would assert (and there are some such) that Schiller was not a purely religious character, I must again answer, that his works are a sufficient proof that he firmly believed in a superior Providence, which controls all the efforts of human force and prudence; that he accepted his talents as an "inspired gift of God," and used them in His service, by awakening in his fellow men a keen sense of all that is holy, chaste, noble, and beautiful. His doubts were of very short duration, and such as usually beset a passionate, overflowing genius. It may be said that all his virtuous characters are counterparts of each other. Schiller himself owns his subjective tendency, and his consequent deficiency in this respect. He did his best to make as much as possible out of his own ideal of excellence, and well he succeeded. If, in loving one, we love them all, our esteem for that one is so great that it would easily bear division. We are

content with the object of our affections, for that object is SCHILLER.

My space, but not my subject, is exhausted. I cannot do better than conclude my lecture in the words of his firm and best friend, Göthe:—

Es glühte seine Wangen roth und röther  
Von jener Jugend, die uns nie verfliegt,  
Von jenem Muth, der früher oder später  
Den Widerstand der stumphen Welt besiegt.  
Von jenem Glauben, der sich, stets erhöhter,  
Bald kühn hervorbrängt, bald gebüsbig, schmiegt,  
Damit das Gute wirke, wachse, fromme,  
Damit der Tag des Edeln endlich komme.

Und manche Geister, die mit ihm gerungen  
Sein groß Verdienst unwillig anerkannt,  
Sie fühlten sich von seiner Kraft durchdrungen,  
In seinem Kreise willig festgebannt.  
Zum Höchsten hat er sich emporgeschwungen,  
Mit Allem, was wir schätzen, eng verwandt.  
So feiert ihn! Denn, was dem Mann das Leben  
Nur halb ertheilt, soll ganz die Nachwelt geben.\*

\* Warmer and warmer his cheek e'er glowed  
With Youth, that never showed decay ;  
With Spirits, which at last subdue  
The resistance of a senseless world.  
With Faith which, ever higher soaring,  
Courageously advances, or as bravely yields,  
So that the Good may influence, act, increase,  
And truly noble times at last shine forth.

And many a mind, with his that wrestled,  
And his great worth unwillingly confess'd,  
By the feeling of his strength was bound,  
A willing captive, in his magic circle.  
Ever to the highest pinnacle he soared,  
Was e'er at one with all that man esteems ;  
So honour him ! for what to man in life  
Is half awarded, futurity gives wholly.

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